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Romantic Tales.

VOL. IV.

Romantic Tales,

BY

M. G. LEWIS,

Author of the Monk, Adelgitha, &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

—"Ah! happy he, who thus in magic themes
O'er worlds bewitched in early rapture dreams,
Where wild Enchantment waves her potent wand,
And Fancy's beauties fill her fairy land."—

CRABBE.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

CONTAINING

MY UNCLE'S GARRET-WINDOW.
BILL JONES.
AMORASSAN, OR THE SPIRIT OF THE FROZEN OCEAN.

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My Uncle's Garret Window,

A

PANTOMIMIC TALE.

——"He looks through Galilæo's eyes."—

POPE.

My Uncle's Garret-Window.

—"With silent steps I'll follow you all day."—
DRYDEN.

My uncle was a genius and a poet—of course, he was as poor as David's rat, and lived in a garret. He was a kind-hearted man, and I loved him too sincerely to hesitate at putting my neck in jeopardy once a day by climbing the crazy ladder, which afforded the only means of reaching his celestial abode. Yet after my taking all this trouble it frequently happened, that I found my uncle too busy with the Muses to bestow any of his attention on so insignificant an animal as his nephew. On these occasions, he contented himself with shaking me by the hand in silence, laying his finger on his

lip, and pointing to a joint-stool, which stood close by the window; for he occupied himself the only chair in the room, and even that had but three legs to boast of: the joint-stool therefore, though not so dignified a seat, was in fact a much more secure and comfortable one.

But when I found myself established on my joint-stool, how was I to employ myself? —When my uncle was seized with one of these fits of inspiration, they frequently continued for a considerable time: where then was I to find amusement during this interval? My uncle was too much an author to think any body's works worth reading except his own; for those I happened to have no great taste, and I did not care to affront him by asking for the productions of any other brain. Reading then was out of the question; but in order that my eyes might not be quite idle, I employed them in examining what was going on in the house opposite to us. By the help of a pocket telescope, could distinctly see every thing

which passed in our neighbour's first and second floor; and after indulging myself for some days in these observations, I became so well acquainted with every member of this unknown family, that I felt myself as much interested about their proceedings, as if I had been a member of it myself.

You will say that this systematic *espionage* was not very honourable: I allow it—But then, on the other hand, it was very entertaining; and I am now going to bribe you to approve of my conduct, by admitting you to a partnership in my stolen knowledge.

The street which my uncle inhabited was narrow, and the quarter was not one of the most fashionable: but the furniture of the house in question convinced me, that its owner must certainly be a man of considerable opulence. This owner [for the sake of distinction, we will call him Sempronius, for I have been too much occupied by his actions, to have inquired for his real name as yet] this owner is not exactly the

sort of man, whom I should voluntarily have selected for the hero of my tale; but beggars must not be chusers, and I must take the good man, as I find him. He seems to labour under some hypochondriacal complaint, and as he frequently suffers himself in his moments of weakness to indulge his ill-temper, I have not the least hopes of working him up into a portrait of heroic fortitude: on the other hand, I have as little hopes of his furnishing my drama with a striking character for my villain. It's true, he governs his whole family with a rod of iron, and I have already discovered, that he is completely a domestic tyrant: every one seems to feel constrained in his company; and it is only in the absence of the master of the mansion, that innocent mirth ventures to show itself within its doors. Yet still I observe, that with the same unbending gravity with which he censures his wife and rates his servants, he receives every Sunday the visits of a distressed Emigrant (with whose worth and whose wants accident has

made me well acquainted), to whose complaints he seems to listen with unwearied patience, and whom he never suffers to depart with empty pockets. As the poor gentleman retraces his steps, I observe, that his walk is firmer and lighter, and that not unfrequently a tear trembles in his eye; but he never quits the street without turning back, and with clasped hands casting a look of gratitude towards the window of Sempronius's study—Sempronius then has a good heart, but a most intolerable temper—Well! well! we will hope, that his ill-temper proceeds from ill-health and from increasing years, for Sempronius cannot now be far from his grand climacteric. I conclude this from the colour of his hair, which here and there age has already silvered.

I conjecture, that he must be a merchant of some kind or other. What makes me think this is, that the ground-floor of his house looks, as if it had been converted into a magazine. Besides, he is regularly absent from home exactly at 'Change-hours:

I am rather of opinion, that he dabbles in the funds.

But how in the name of wonder, could Sempronius, so little amiable as he appears to be, have obtained such a treasure, as the wife whom I am now going to describe?—or rather how came he to be so singularly fortunate as to draw *two* such great prizes in Hymen's lottery; a lottery, in which [Heaven have pity on all poor Christian husbands!] there are so many blanks?—Many years ago he lost a wife.... Oh! she was worthy to have been the empress of her whole sex!—So beautiful.... so good.. ..—"You have seen her then?"—[Such was my uncle's demand one day, when I was indulging myself in enthusiastic but just commendations of the lady in question]—"You have seen her then? You knew her?"—Alas! never! I was not so fortunate—"But you have been told of her charms and merits?"—Not a syllable; I never heard her mentioned in my life——"Then pray, how are you so certain,

that she was so beautiful and so good?"—Why, my dear uncle, you must know, that her picture in oils hangs in the second wife's sitting-room, and never was my eye gratified by more perfect features or a more noble countenance: and that this countenance belonged to the wife of Sempronius, there can be no doubt. Sempronius himself (but much younger) is introduced in the picture; and the attitude in which the painter has represented them, sufficiently marks the relation of the parties: besides, if there were no other reason for concluding that she was his wife, I should be convinced of it by the striking resemblance between her countenance and that of a young man about twenty, who appears to be our neighbour's son, and probably is the only offspring of this marriage.

—"Well! Sir! well! so much for her beauty, and her marriage. Now, Sir, granting that she was a wife, what makes you suppose, that she must necessarily have been a *good* one?"—

—"My dear Sir, it is quite impossible,

that she should have been otherwise—Whenever Sempronius is displeased with his present help-mate, he never fails to point to that portrait: he seems to contrast her conduct with that of the object of his reproof, and to hold her up as a model for the imitation of her whole sex—while on the other hand, his second wife—[she is reading King Lear at this moment, for the edition is Boydell's, and I can distinctly read the title; so we will call her Cordelia, if you please]—Cordelia then, whenever she finds her patience on the point of being shipwrecked among the numberless little domestic storms, which the unhappy temper of our friend Sempronius is perpetually raising, constantly fixes her eyes on that mild heavenly countenance, and seems to ask—"In this situation how would *you* have acted?"—She then turns to her peevish husband with a serene look; the clouds of displeasure, which were gathering on her brow, have totally disappeared; she takes his hand kindly, as if imploring his pardon for having given him

offence; and never leaves him, till her winning manners and engaging smiles have charmed away his ill-humour, as David's lyre banished the evil spirit from the bosom of the frantic Saul."—

—"But pray, nephew, what makes you be so certain, that the original of this portrait, which produces such beneficial effects, is no longer in existence?"—

—"Surely, the presence of a second wife is a proof fully sufficient of the decease of a first."—

—"But there may be no second wife in the case: Cordelia may be his daughter."—

—"Impossible, my dearest uncle! absolutely impossible! A thousand little circumstances.... the tender familiarity which exists between her and Sempronius.... the authority with which she governs the whole house.... the intimate yet respectful conduct towards her of her step-son Edward [you see, I make no scruple of christening my neighbours over again].... the difference, which Sempronius makes in his be-

haviour, when addressing her, and when addressing the said Edward.... No; it is quite impossible, that Cordelia should be any thing but his wife. Besides, to put the matter out of all doubt, you must know that there is a little boy about eight or nine years old, whose features exhibit the same mixed resemblance to Cordelia and Sempronius, which Edward's exhibit to Sempronius and the lady, of whose portrait I have spoken in terms of such warm approbation."—

Cordelia then is the wife of Sempronius; and what a wife! Perhaps, she is the only woman on earth worthy to occupy the place of her predecessor! Her whole constitution seems to be composed of gentleness and benevolence; and in truth, it was necessary that she *should* be composed of such materials, in order that the vinegar of her husband's disposition might be softened down and rendered supportable by the infusion of her oil of roses. I am thoroughly instructed in her mode of life, for I can overlook the whole

of her sitting-room. It joins on to her husband's study, and here she passes the greatest part of the day. Here she sits, works, writes, and reads: some of her books are now lying in the window, and even at this distance I can distinguish the names of "Shakspeare"—"Cowper," and "Paley." —Here it is, that she settles all the affairs of her household, and from hence as from their centre I can see good order, diligence, and œconomy spread themselves forth, and pervade every department of her family. Different occupations have all their stated hours: always active, always employed, without noise, without hurry, she manages, that every thing should be done in its proper time and place; and the hand, with which she governs the whole machine, is no less light, than sure and steady.

I will only mention two other points in Cordelia's character, which have struck, and which please me particularly. The one is, that in spite of her husband's lectures and frequent appeals to it, she still suffers

the portrait of his first wife to decorate her own private apartment. The other is, that in her endeavours to soothe her husband she never fails to be successful, and that in her presence Sempronius always seems to be less gloomy and less unruly, than when he is beyond the sphere of her influence.

Her step-son is established in the second floor; his room is exactly over his father's study, and there prevails in it an air of such systematic confusion, books, letters, old pens and inkstands lie so mingled together upon all the chairs and tables, and sheets of half-written paper full of blots and scratches are so constantly fluttering about the chamber, that I have no sort of doubt of his being a poet; not to mention a large book in a white parchment cover, which has quite the look of a common-place book, and in which he frequently writes a few lines, after biting the top of his quill for some minutes, and taking two or three turns up and down the room, accompanying his movement by vehement gesticulations. I am also con-

vinced, that his verses are generally amatory, and addrest to no imaginary object—He often copies something out of the aforesaid book with the white-parchment cover, and seals it up carefully in the form of a letter, which he always gives the postman with his own hands. Besides, when he has secured his door against intruders.... [ah! poor lad! how little he suspects, that I see every thing that he is about].... he frequently reads over and over again certain little notes, (written on a fine shining paper with coloured edges, and very neatly folded up,) and which he seldom fails to press repeatedly to his lips, before he arrives at the end of them. As to the peculiarities of his temper, I observe by what passes between him and his father, and still more between him and a certain aunt who frequents the family, that his feelings are quick and susceptible, and that he easily takes offence. He is careless and rather *harum-skarum*, for he sometimes leaves the key in the secretary, where all these precious *billet-doux* are deposited, and

then suddenly recollecting his neglect, he flies up stairs to repair it in such a hurry, that I expect him every moment to break his neck by the way. He is benevolent, for he never sees a beggar without relieving him; extravagant, for he receives his allowance monthly, and it never lasts above half the time; proud and high-minded, for having applied to his father either for an increase of allowance, or an advance (I could not exactly ascertain which), and receiving a refusal in the first instance, when Sempronius sent him a bank-note the next morning the youth returned it, and preferred waiting till the first of the present month. I observe too, that he is sometimes a little out of humour without cause, in which I suppose he takes after his father: however, his ill-temper never is vented upon any thing except his spaniel, whom he feeds all dinner time, and who always sleeps with his head resting upon the foot of his master.

As to his half-brother, little Willy, he is

too young as yet to show much character; but I am very much mistaken, if he has not a decided genius for the arts. Every morsel of paper, which falls in his way, is immediately covered with his inventions. If his pencil is taken from him, he hunts about, till he finds a piece of coal or chalk, with which he scrawls landscapes and figures over all the doors, walls, and tables, to the great annoyance of his order-loving mother, and of the house-maid, whose wet napkin has no sort of respect for the productions of this juvenile Sir Joshua. In a moment the effusions of his genius are effaced for ever: but in vain does his mother scold, and in vain does the housemaid scrub; he sets to work again with unabated ardour, and in defiance of these enemies of art, in a few hours the walls, doors, and tables, are as fully decorated as before.

But I must not omit the portrait of the afore-mentioned *aunt*, who though not an inmate of the family, exercises over it no inconsiderable authority. From her likeness

to Sempronius, she must certainly be his sister, though evidently some years older: she is tall, thin, pale, and then such a nose and chin!—She is almost a daily guest, and Sempronius never suffers himself to indulge his ill-humours in her society. Sempronius is a shrewd long-headed man, and minds the main-chance: from the respect which he pays her, I conclude, that the old lady is in good circumstances, her own mistress, without children, and that her brother flatters himself, that either he or his offspring will hold no contemptible place in her will. Nay, I am not only persuaded that she has no children, but that the venerable lady is still a votary of Diana; which conclusion I draw, not only from observations made on her person and manners, but from the extreme love and intimacy which prevails between her and a large tortoise-shell cat, which generally lies basking before Cordelia's fire.

This good lady.... [what shall we call her? Her brother's name is Sempronius—"Amandus he; Amanda she"—So says

Sterne—Sempronia be her name then]—Sempronia then seems much attached to her brother, but Cordelia is evidently no favourite with her.—She treats her with such cold and formal politeness.... She so often bites her thin lips, as if desirous of repressing a scornful sneer, and which she takes good care *not* to repress..... If she opens one of the volumes placed on Cordelia's table, she never fails to clap it down again hastily with such a shrug of the shoulders, and such a shake of the head, and then such a turning up of the whites of her eyes to Heaven.... From the latter circumstance I am tempted to believe, that the good lady has been a little bit by the Methodists—However, Cordelia considers it as beneath her to take notice of these little pieces of impertinence, and only answers the sneer of contempt, with which her sister-in-law occasionally favours her, by a smile of the sweetest gentleness and most heavenly forbearance. As to Edward, he and his aunt are at open enmity: three minutes of conversation with her are

generally sufficient to make him throv fire and flames; then *he* flies out of room, and up go the whites of *her* eyes piteously than ever.

But undoubtedly her greatest favouri the family [I mean, the greatest upon legs] is little Willy: he holds the very place in her good graces to the tortoise cat. Of this, the young rogue seems scious; and proud of enjoying that sun which is bestowed upon so few, he r fails to welcome her arrival by a volu offering of his rosy lips, and sports frisks about her arm-chair as merrily a wantonly, as a butterfly flutters abo honey-pot—I warrant me, the good la seldom unprovided with a box full of s plumbs.

Such are the persons who compose family, and such is the knowledge, wh have obtained of them during a daily o vation of several months—But lately s circumstances have occurred, which excited my curiosity respecting their

erns more than usually. I have fortunately ucceeded in communicating this curiosity to ny uncle's bosom; he has consented to be ny amanuensis; and to-morrow—[*He* pro-ided with plenty of ink, pens, and paper, nd myself furnished with my aforesaid ocket-telescope]—it is our intention to com-nence an exact and systematic account of verything, which passes in the house of his pposite neighbour. *I* am to report, and *He* s to register.

Having completed this introduction, hich was necessary to make my read-rs acquainted with our Dramatis Per-onæ, I shall proceed to my employment—lark!—the clock strikes ten—that is the iour, at which Sempronius regularly makes is appearance at Cordelia's breakfast table, nd I hasten to post myself at

MY UNCLE'S GARRET-WINDOW

Tuesday, May 5th, 4 o'clock.

Your new appointment of secretary, my dear uncle, is likely to be a sinecure for to-day. Cordelia and her boy are just gone into the country, and mean to pass some days there; for I saw her maid pack up two clean muslin dresses and four shifts in the chaise-seat—Sempronius and his eldest son dine out: I saw the former show Edward the card of invitation, and by his pointing out a particular part of it, I conclude that he was bidding him observe the dinner-hour, and take care to be ready in time; for punctuality is not among the number of Edward's good qualities—However, he will not be too late to-day, for he is dressing at this moment—A hackney-coach stops at the door—Sempronius and Edward are both gone, so you may lay down your pen, my dear uncle!

Wednesday, 5 o'clock.

To-day promises to be as barren as yesterday. Sempronius has finished a solitary meal in his own study, and is now making a tooth-pick—It seems, he is not very skilful, for he has already spoiled two quills—and now in a pet he throws the splinters of the third to one side of the room, and the pen-knife to the other—Deuce take the peevish old fellow! I protest, his ill-temper almost makes me lose mine—I'll step up stairs, and see, what Edward is about.

I might as well have staid where I was; Edward is not at home.

Look! look!—the study-door opens—now then we shall have something interesting—Pshaw! it's only the maiden-aunt—But this is not her usual time for visiting us.... and bless my heart! what a fuss the old woman seems to be in!—She opens the door, which communicates with Cordelia's drawing-room, and looks round to see, whether the coast is clear.—I protest, I can as little tell what to make of her mysterious

proceedings, as her brother; who sits there with his mouth open, his eyes staring, his brows drawn together, his hands resting on his knees, and his whole body bending forwards.—He is mightily puzzled!

But now we shall get a little insight into the business. The virgin has seated herself close at his elbow, and with her nose almost running into his ear—[I'm sure I pity him, poor man! I should dislike so much myself to have the old cat thus near me!]—she opens all the sluices of her eloquence, while her arms assist her speech with all the powers of gesticulation.

Now what *can* she be chattering about?—Something of consequence, that is certain—.... and of no pleasant import, that is equally sure: for Sempronius grows darker with every syllable—there! he was on the point of jumping up in a rage; but his tormentor grasped him by the arm, and forcing him into his chair again, insisted upon being heard to the end—still do the symptoms of represt passion grow stronger and stronger.

—Now then,.... aye! now the Lava overflows!—the man is absolutely terrific, when he is really incensed—till now I had only seen him play the Jupiter Tonans, when little domestic contrarieties had occurred to put him out of his way; but his anger was merely a gentle breeze, compared to his present emotions. His mind is now agitated by a tempest, a tornado, a sirocco burning and pestilential!—I never saw a man in such a passion before. Bless my soul! bless my soul!—what *can* the old cat have been telling him?

All of a sudden, he leaves off prancing about the room, stalks up to his sister's chair, and standing before her, looks her full in the face!—an appeal to her conscience, no doubt; a solemn inquiry, whether all that she has been saying is not a falsehood of her own invention—the aunt is highly offended at the question—she rises with great dignity from her seat,—she stretches out her yellow arm, and is going to call Heaven to witness that.... no; no—she points to the door leading

to the staircase, and a contemptuous sneer which accompanies the action, assures me, that she tells Sempronius, that there lies the way, by which he may remove all doubts—I am right—Sempronius bounces to the door—in his impatience he cannot turn the lock; he kicks the door violently, and at length it gives way—he beckons his sister and disappears—A prayer book has almost forced itself out of her pocket: She stops to push it back again, and then follows her brother, with her hands placed orderly before her, and the composure of a saint!—Good soul! Bless my heart! what mischief can she be about!—it is growing dusky—I declare, I have a great mind to run down into the street, and watch for their coming out: then by dodging them unobserved, who knows but I may discover at last....! stop! stop! —I may spare myself the trouble—as I hope to live and breathe.... the amiable pair are at this very moment in Edward's chamber.

Sempronius stands before his son's writing

desk—it is fastened, but that matters little: the father has forced the lock—open flies every drawer—out flies every paper—surely .... no deficiency in the counting-house.... no suspicious entry in his books.... oh! no: I have been too long intimate with Edward, and know his character and heart too well: such a thing is quite impossible; besides, Sempronius finds a purse half full and throws it aside with an air of indifference.... ha! ha!—Now I understand him!—He examines the secretary—he suspects that there is a private drawer—yes; what he wishes to discover.... [Ah! *I* could tell him, where to find them!] are precisely those very things which Edward is most anxious to hide from every one—No eye has ever been suffered to see them, but his own—(and *mine*)—these are what Sempronius wishes to find.... Mercy upon me! He has found them! the secret spring has given way; the drawer is open! —And what does it contain?—First comes a thick packet of letters, carefully tyed together with a ribband, colour sky-blue—[Have

you written it down, my dear uncle?—Very well!] Secondly, a nosegay, but so faded, that I cannot even guess at the flowers.—Thirdly.... upon my honor nothing less than a miniature in a shagreen case!—Sempronius shakes his head, and shows it to his sister; it is plain, that he has never seen the original. His sister scarcely looks at it, but shrugs up her shoulders: it is equally plain, that *she* has never seen the original either, and that the object of Edward's attachment as yet is only conjectured. Yet Sempronius does not seem the less displeased, for down goes the miniature on the floor, and away flies the poor skeleton of a nosegay out of the window. Alas! alas for Edward! the ill-natured aunt has certainly discovered, what I flattered myself was a secret only known to himself and to me; and she is now determined to take ample revenge on him for having occasionally dared to be of *one* opinion, when *she* was of another.

While Sempronius is busied with the secretary, the antiquated dragon of virtue is

by no means idle—she has been tossing over Edward's wardrobe; for the careless youth had left the key in the lock. Her brother is now reading the letters one after another: however their contents seem by no means to his taste, for he seldom gets through more than half a dozen lines before the paper bestrews the floor with a thousand pieces; yet still he proceeds to inspect the next.—Hold! hold! Sempronia interrupts him! she has found a prize!—But I cannot see any thing in it, which should give her so much joy—It seems to me nothing more, than a plain white dimity waistcoat, which was hanging upon the arm of a chair, unconscious of harm, and meditating no treason.—Ha! but the aunt has discovered an inner pocket on the left side, exactly on the place against which the heart must beat. From this, Sempronia now draws forth with a look of triumph a ribband, ornamented with embroidery in silver. —Well! I protest, I can still see no harm in the ribband—Sempronius however, is not of the same opinion, for down go the remain-

ing letters on the floor, while he seizes the ribband, and examines it closely—Ha! now I comprehend! the letters were not signed; there was a doubt respecting the writer; but on the ribband, the name of the giver was embroidered; though whether at length, or only the initials, I will not pretend to say.—However, either has answered Miss Grimalkin's purpose, for she draws up her scraggy neck half-a-yard higher; while her brother's face looks like a volcano, all black and fiery, and away fly the ribband and the waistcoat through the window into the street.

They fall exactly upon the head of a passenger, who quite surprised at this unexpected salutation, stops, and disengaging his head from the waistcoat, picks up the ribband, whose glittering ornaments.... may I never speak again, if it is not Edward himself!—He recognizes the precious pledge of affection: but thrown into the street....? He makes but one spring to the door—ring, ring, ring, goes the bell—an old grey-headed footman opens the door—Edward rushes in;

the door closes—I see, that Sempronius and his amiable sister have heard the bell ring violently; but before they have time to conjecture the cause, Edward stands before them breathless with speed and anxiety, his cheeks burning, his eyes staring, his mouth open, and the important ribband still fluttering in his hand: his spaniel too has recognized his master's property, and has dragged the white dimity waistcoat up stairs in his mouth. Edward has got no further than the door; there he stands like a statue, as if petrified by the sight of the two arch-foes of his love, while the fragments of the letters strewn on the floor leave him no doubt, that the repository of his dearest secret has been violated.

—"Walk in, young gentleman! pray, walk in; we shall be very glad of your company!" cries the father: not that I hear a syllable; but nothing can be more expressive of sarcastic politeness, than the frequent bowing of his head, and the waving his hand backwards and forwards, while his lips quiver and his eyes flame. And now he points

to the miniature as a proof, which puts the case out of doubt.

And how does Edward look? like some miserable sinner, surprized *in flagranti?*—not he truly!—the first thing he does is to seize the mis-used picture, and press it to his heart, as if anxious to make atonement for its having been treated so unworthily: and now he advances towards his father, slowly but firmly, and with humility but not meanness, takes his hand, and raises it affectionately to his lips.

Now if *I* were Sempronius, this submissive action would go a great way towards softening my heart: I should find it very difficult to remain quite as angry, as I intended.—But whether he is himself conscious of this effect, and is afraid of giving way to his own weakness.... or whether he is ashamed of yielding so soon, and before a witness who would not fail to upbraid him for his folly .... whatever be the cause, it is certain, that Edward's humility has not produced the desired effect: on the contrary, Sempronius

seems to be more incensed than before; and repulsing his son with violence, the sudden movement makes him strike his hand against the lips, which were in the act of kissing it. Edward starts back hastily and covers his mouth with his handkerchief; but he endeavours in vain to conceal the blood which gushes from his bruised lips: the cambric is dyed with crimson. This sight rouses even old grimalkin's sensibility; she looks alarmed and places herself between them, while she grasps her brother by the arm.

And now instead of being Sempronius, if I were Edward, I would stand boldly on the consciousness of my good intentions, and collecting the whole firmness of my character, I would tell the choleric old man—"And yet in spite of this ill-usage, I still kiss in spirit with sincere affection the hand, which repulses me so unkindly.—Yes, I avow it! [and my only fault is, that I did not avow it sooner] a virtuous maiden possesses my whole heart; I love her, and shall love her while I live.—Here is her portrait; but it is painted

here"—[and then I'd point to my heart] "in colours never to be effaced.—Perhaps you will disapprove of my attachment at first; but only become acquainted with her merits, and I am certain of obtaining your consent. Nay; I should be certain of it even at this moment, if instead of tearing her letters you could but have had patience to read them through."—

Now I'd wager my pocket telescope [which at this moment is invaluable] against the old goose-quill with which you are writing, my dear uncle, that as soon as the blood would permit him to speak, Edward said these very words, or at least something very like them. —He showed the miniature—he pointed to his heart, and afterwards to the letters—he clasped his hands together, and raised his eyes to heaven with a look of such enthusiasm, while attesting the perfections of his mistress.... Upon my word, I did not give the hot-headed youth credit for so much temper and good sense.

Sempronius exercises his only talent: he

fumes and storms, and stalks about the room, and curses, and swears, and calls heaven and hell to witness: while the good lady sister, having completed her benevolent work, sits by the window and looks into the street, quite unconcerned, and as if she had nothing at all to do with the business.

So much the better—now that her venomous tongue is at rest, the storm begins to slacken. Sempronius walks backwards and forwards in silence for some minutes.—Now he stands still, and leans against the wall with his fore finger extended upon his cheek, as if buried in profound thought—he has come to a decision; he advances towards his son, and..... Heaven be thanked! then paternal affection still lives in his bosom, for of his own accord e offers his hand to Edward—Edward springs forward eagerly to clas. ..... But hold! Sempronius draws it back, and the fore-finger of it repeatedly moving upwards and downward assures me, that he is laying down the conditions upon

which Edward may be restored again to favor.

Edward starts back; he stands motionless; his eye burns; he seems to struggle against his feelings: if Sempronius were not his father, I should expect to see the youth turn his back upon him with contempt. In short, he looks to me exactly, as if the terms of peace just proposed had been—" an absolute renunciation of the maiden in question, and for ever!"—I am certainly right; for at length Edward has recovered the power of speech. He places one hand upon his heart; he raises the other to heaven with an air of the most determined resolution; and with every word which he utters, his courage and his enthusiasm appear to increase.—But he is not suffered to speak long.—The tempest again rages; Sempronius interrupts his son with a fresh burst of thunder; and now that the fire is re-kindled, the rattlesnake in petticoats takes care to throw in a word or two, as she looks over her shoulder towards the

disputants, and kindly prevents the flame from being extinguished a second time.

The Lord be praised! this embarrassing scene at length is concluded—Sempronius's passion on a sudden gives place to the most frozen composure: he spreads his arms out widely, and with a shrug of the shoulders and a slight inclination of the head, he pronounces a single decisive sentence, and quits the room. Edward turns pale; he looks as if he could scarcely credit his hearing, and remains like one thunderstruck.—Can you possibly guess, my dear uncle, what it was, that Sempronius said at parting, and which produced so strong an effect?—For my own part, I am completely puzzled.

The aunt however, does not think proper to make her retreat at present—No; she is preparing to give her nephew a long lecture; for she turns her chair round, clears her throat in her pocket-handkerchief, smooths her petticoats, and takes a pinch of snuff. Now then she begins.

She might spare her breath, for Edward

does not hear a syllable: he seems totally absorbed in his own gloomy reflections. The virgin might have talked on till dooms-day uninterrupted by him, if she had not unadvisedly taken it into her head to pick up the fragments of one of the letters, which accident had thrown at her feet; and now as proof of the facts advanced in her discourse, she proceeds to read the letter aloud with a sneering look and theatrical action. The well known words give Edward the alarm—he awakens from his lethargy. This unwarrantable intrusion into the secrets of his heart, this scornful treatment both of his mistress and himself, at once restores his presence of mind. He springs forward, snatches the paper from her hands, and throwing his arms around her, bears her swiftly [but without roughness] to the landing-place—She evidently resists; her open mouth assures me, that she protests loudly against this involuntary exit: but she is already on the wrong side of the threshold—Edward closes and bolts the door, and my eyes

behold no longer this model of feminine perfection!

My grief for this loss, however, is but of short duration—she bounces into her brother's study, and renews her attacks upon him with increased zeal—Sempronius has seated himself at his writing-desk—he has written two notes, and in one of them (which was very short) he now encloses a parcel of bank-bills: he rings the bell and sends the old grey-headed servant out with the other.—The aunt continues talking without repose, but she gets no answer. Sempronius walks up and down the room, silent, and gloomy, and without attending to her—he seems impatient for the messenger's return.

The domestic is come back—he receives the other note with its inclosure, and retires a second time—but in a minute after I see Edward undraw the bolt of his door, and the servant enters—Probably, the good old man guesses the contents of the note, for while he delivers it, he turns away his head, and

the back of his hand passing over his eyes rapidly appears to be wiping away tears.

The unfortunate lover receives the note with a firm countenance; but his resolution only lasts till he has perused the contents—the letter falls from his trembling hand; his arms drop powerless by his side; he rests his head against the frame of the window: he seems totally absorbed in the bitterness of his sensations.

The old domestic opens a closet-door, and draws forth a moderate sized trunk: undesired, he proceeds to pack up the contents of a wardrobe, and of a chest of drawers.—Alas! alas! poor Edward! now then I know the decision of your unyielding father!—The punishment pronounced upon you for possessing a feeling heart, eyes for beauty, and sympathy for worth, is nothing less than banishment from your paternal mansion.

The trunk is packed and corded, and now with a countenance expressive of the

deepest melancholy the old man offers Edward the key.—Edward sees him not.... hears him not.... heeds him not.... till he feels his right hand moistened with tears —he starts from his lethargy—he looks down—the venerable servant kneels at his feet; he has clasped the hand of his young master in both of his, and presses his lips upon it—Edward compels him to rise, and shakes the old man by the hand heartily and kindly—he takes the parcel of notes from the floor, and selecting one, gives it to his old attendant—but the servant looks at it with a melancholy smile, shakes his head, lays it upon the writing desk, and hiding his face with both his hands, he quits the apartment.

Edward now proceeds to examine his papers. Some of them are fastened together again with the afore-mentioned blue ribband, and deposited in his bosom—with the rest he fills his pockets, indiscriminately; the bank-notes are placed in a small red morocco case, and confided to his waist-

coat—the spaniel frisks around the table, and every now and then I hear him bark joyously: probably, he is aware, that his master prepares to go out, and for *his* part, he is quite ready to be of the party —But his gaiety makes a singular contrast with his master's melancholy.

Hark!—a post-chaise comes rattling up the street!—It stops before Sempronius's house—the door is already open: the postillion dismounts; he and the old servant are now in Edward's room, and carry out the trunk between them!—What, then, my poor friend Edward! Am I *quite* to lose you?—Will your severe father not even suffer you to breathe the same air with him?—Now by my soul, my heart bleeds for you!

The trunk is tyed on—the postillion is on his horse—the chaise-step is let down—the old servant appears again in Edward's room —Edward starts up, and follows him, evidently making a violent effort to tear himself away; but when he reaches the door,

he stops, and turns to take a melancholy farewell-look of that chamber, which perhaps he has inhabited even from his earliest years.... where he has past so many happy and so many bitter hours.... where he has so often smiled, and so often wept.... which he now quits and probably for ever! —He draws his hat down over his eyes, and as he passes the threshold, I can see his knees tremble!—Alas! poor youth! with a broken heart do you quit your father's dwelling; it seems, that even to say farewell to your stern judge is forbidden you!—Oh! suffer with patience; suffer with firmness; preserve your good heart pure from every too bitter reflection upon him, who, harsh as he is, is still your parent. *He* has ceased to act as a father, but never forget that *you* are a son.

I am too much grieved by Edward's departure to attend with any patience to the amiable pair in the study below; they may do what they please—for I will not honor them at present with my attention.—There-

fore, my dear uncle, you may lay down your pen for to-day; into the bargain, in half an hour more it will be too dark for me to....

Sit down again! sit down again, my dear uncle! Edward is not yet gone! At this moment he stands before his mother's picture, which (as I told you formerly) hangs over the sopha in Cordelia's sitting-room —his eyes are rooted upon those beloved features—"Ah! mother!" methinks I hear him say, "it is well for you, that you sleep in the grave! It is well, that you are not here to see your only son banished from the house and heart of his father, and to kiss away these tears, which you would surely mingle with your own! Perhaps, were you still alive, all this would not happen; perhaps you would fold your arms round the son, who to-day is thrown out upon the wide world without shelter, and then when my father heard the prayers of an agonized mother pleading for her only child.... Oh! were you but alive, my

mother!—were not your place now filled by a stranger....!"

No! no! these last sentences Edward did not say—I wrong his justice; he is not so ungrateful for all Cordelia's kindness, for see!—he fastens the silver-embroidered ribband round an alabaster vase, which stands on Cordelia's chimney-piece; doubtless he wishes to convince his step-mother, that he thought of her at parting, and has bequeathed her this precious gift of love, as a silent memorial of his undiminished friendship—Oh! she will certainly find your legacy, poor Edward, and her own feeling heart will interpret to her the intentions and the sentiments of yours—she will often think of you while absent, will labour incessantly to effect your return; and while Cordelia remains there, you will not be *quite* forgotten within the dwelling of your father.

Again he turns to his mother's picture—near it hangs a small sketch of it in Indian ink, the production of Willy's all-imitating

pencil; it is drawn upon a sheet of letter-paper and fastened against the wall with a pin, thus (with the true vanity of a youthful artist) boldly challenging a comparison with the original—there are a thousand defects in the drawing; but even from hence I can see, that he has succeeded in catching the resemblance.—Edward eagerly snatches the paper from its place, and then having prest his lips with pious enthusiasm upon the frame of the picture, he hastens from the apartment as abruptly, as if he dreaded, lest his father should appear and deprive him of his newly-found treasure.

Edward is in the chaise—the post-boy flourishes his whip—Edward is gone!

Friday Morning.

I have nicked the very moment: Cordelia's chaise stands before the door, and the old servant and the maid are busy in taking out the seat, and several parcels. The drawing-room door opens, and gay as a lark little Willy comes jumping into the chamber. His mother then cannot be far off—He carries a roll of paper under his arm, as black and smoaky, as if it were a manuscript dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum—he unrolls it and holds up the contents to admire their reflexion in the looking-glass.—Now I understand what makes the boy seem so proud and so happy: at the house where he has been visiting, he discovered two old coloured prints, one representing a battle, and the other a hunting-match; and his good-natured host has gratified the future Raphael by making him a present of them both.—Well, Willy! this *is* a treasure indeed!

But see! His mother makes her appearance—the old domestic follows her.—Ah!

then she has already heard of Edward's banishment; I could swear it by her pale countenance, and dejected air. Without taking off her pelisse, she walks slowly towards the sopha, seats herself upon it, and leaning her arm upon the table, and her cheek against her hand, she seems buried in thoughts evidently of no pleasant nature—she now addresses a few short questions to the servant—his answers are equally brief—he is dismist, and Willy is ordered to accompany him.

Cordelia is now alone—she sits with her hands clasped, her eyes fixed upon the carpet.—Now she raises them to heaven, as if she uttered a mental prayer, and then wipes away a tear.—Ah! her husband has long accustomed her to the expression of this silent grief—she rises, and paces up and down the chamber with an absent look; now her eye rests upon the flower vase, round which the embroidered ribband is fastened!—she stops—she seems to be endeavouring to recollect where she had seen it before—she untyes it,

nd while she reads the silver characters, a nelancholy smile plays on her pale cheeks, nd she shakes her head dejectedly.—Now he unlocks a small japanned cabinet, in which he is accustomed to keep her most valuable rnaments, and in one of the drawers of vhich she deposits the embroidered ribband —now suddenly she closes the cabinet, locks :, and conceals the key in her pocket.

The door ope..s—Sempronius enters—Oh! hen she had heard him coming up stairs. Ie has a pen stuck behind his ear, and pro-ably is just come out of his counting-house I suppose, that it is in the back-part of the ouse] to welcome his wife on her return ome. The visit, however, does not seem o be quite to his taste: he looks like a school-oy, who has committed some fault and ex-ects to be scolded by his tutor.—The first ompliments are over, and the interview ecomes quite comical—he evidently does ot well know, how to begin the relation of vhat has occurred during her absence; and he for her part does not seem at all inclined

to give him the least assistance.—They are both silent: he hums, and haws, and scrapes the carpet with his feet, and sits by no means comfortably upon his chair.—Bravo! how unusually polite the man is grown! he insists upon helping Cordelia to take off her pelisse, the pelisse is folded up; and yet the conversation does not get on—Sempronius walks to the window, and draws one of the venetian blinds quite up.—Thank you, good Sir! It was very much in my way; but now I can see what you are about much better—he picks up a knitting needle, which had fallen on the floor: he looks out of window, and beats time against the frame with his fingers —now he walks to the fire-place, and sets his watch by a small chamber-clock, which stands upon the mantle-piece: the clock is out of order, and has not gone for these nine days to my certain knowledge.

But Cordelia, whose gentle heart cannot bear to see any human being suffer, however deservedly, now relieves him from his painful embarrassment—she rises from the

sopha; with a look at once expressing the most friendly interest and the most dignified reproach, she clasps the hand of her husband; she leads him back to the sopha, and places him before the portrait of his deceased wife, —there is something so noble, so exalted in her look and attitude, that she appears to me like a superior being! how clearly does her countenance express, that she says at this moment to her husband—"Could yonder lips now say to you—'thou harsh father, where is my son?'—to such a question what answer could you make?"—

He fixes his eyes on the ground: he dares not look upon the face either of the inanimate mother of his child, or of her living representative.

And now the excellent woman implores him not to be cruel to his son and to himself, while she gives unrestricted course to her tears, and while she endeavours to awaken his feelings by caresses, which express the most heartfelt interest and good will—and

can Sempronius possibly resist her entreaties?

No, no! it would have been impossible, if he were not already so very much in the wrong—he feels, that to give way at all, would now be to confess, that in the whole affair his harshness had been inexcusable: false shame prevents his retracting the sentence, which he ought never to have pronounced. Unless Edward were declared to be an undutiful son, he should be tacitly proved to be himself the most unnatural of fathers. He therefore wilfully hardens his heart and blinds his judgment, in order to escape from the conviction of his error; and he now begins a long and animated narrative of all that has past.—Oh! how I wish, that I were at his elbow, in order that I might set him right occasionally in point of historical fact, if it were only for the love which I bear his good lady-sister, who (if *I* had the management of the brush) should not be painted in this family picture in colours too flattering.

Sempronius's narrative has not produced the desired effect upon his wife; but at least he has contrived to talk himself once more into a persuasion, that every thing which he has done, has been perfectly proper. It was visible, how his importance and self-satisfaction increased with every succeeding period; for the longer he talked, the redder grew his face, and the more violent his action—at first his only object was, to conceal, under an appearance of resentment, how much Cordelia's representations had affected him: but he has succeeded in working himself up into a real fury, which has now got such complete possession of his mind, as even to make him unjust towards Cordelia. Her tears, which stream afresh.... the sudden glow, which flushes her pale cheeks.... the look of mild reproach, which she casts upon her accuser, and which declares herself fully justified before the tribunal of her conscience.... all these circumstances can have no reference, except to some severe reproof, which Sempronius, in the violence of his passion,

has just pronounced against his admirable wife. Perhaps he accuses her of countenancing his son in his disobedience—perhaps she has been long the confidante of Edward's love-affair—perhaps she is acquainted with the maiden in question, and it was through *her* means that her step-son first formed an acquaintance which (according to Sempronius's view of the business) threatens to overturn that prosperity and respectability, which he has been labouring all his life to establish.—Whatever be the fault laid to Cordelia's charge, at least her husband ceases to reproach her with it for the present.—The church-clock strikes—I suppose, that it reminds him that it is time for him to go to the Exchange, for he quits the room abruptly, and bangs the door after him with such violence, that he makes all the windows rattle. Business also calls me away myself; therefore, farewell, my dear uncle, till after dinner.

Friday Afternoon.

Sempronius dines at four: the meal to-day has been unusually short. It is not yet five, and Sempronius has already shut himself up alone in his study, a certain sign, that he is still out of temper. Ah! Cordelia is never out of temper! With a resigned melancholy air she is seated at her piano-forte. A small upright book is open before her; to judge by its dark blue cover, and by the small proportion which the music bears to the words printed at the bottom, I suspect, that she is singing something out of the Edinburgh edition of Scotch Melodies: probably, some plaintive air, which accords with the present disposition of her thoughts. At least the slow movement of her fingers, the expression of her countenance, and her head reclining a little (but *only* a little) towards her left shoulder, convince me, that she must be playing an adagio.

A girl enters with a band-box. Surely, I have seen her face before. Oh! now I recollect her; she carries out parcels for the

milliner, who lives a few doors further down the street. She opens her band-box; but Cordelia shakes her head. It seems, that she wants nothing of that kind at present; but when refused in so gentle a manner, why should the girl look so frightened? She casts a look of apprehension round her.... Hey-day!—she has suddenly snatched a letter out of her band-box, thrown it into Cordelia's lap, and now she runs down stairs ready to break her neck. The ambassadress must know but little of Cordelia, if she supposes, that she will receive a letter, which reaches her by so mysterious a conveyance. Accordingly, she has already quitted the piano-forte in pursuit of the fugitive—the letter has fallen on the ground, and.... but softly! she stops suddenly with her hand resting upon the lock of the door. The letter, which now lies on the carpet, has caught her eye; she certainly must have recognized some well-known hand-writing.

She has!—she springs towards the letter, seizes it eagerly, and conceals it in her bosom,

while a deep crimson overspreads her face. She now opens the other door, opposite to that by which the milliner left her: probably, it leads to her bed-chamber, which is in the back part of the house: the door closes, and I see Cordelia no longer.

What can be the meaning of all this? Surely, I know Cordelia too well to.... Is it possible, that I should have formed an erroneous opinion of her character and principles? Nay; if I find myself deceived here in my notions of female virtue, I will never look for it elsewhere.

Ha! I begin to fear, that the mystery will be unravelled in the most disagreeable manner. The stair-case door is thrown open, and Sempronia makes her appearance, and hands into the room.... (not very gently, or politely, I must confess).... the milliner's apprentice! The venerable virgin seems to be in a great heat! What has happened? I suppose, she met the girl on the stairs; and if she was hurrying down them as quick as she bolted out of the drawing-room, no

wonder, if she excited suspicion in the fair bosom of Miss Grimalkin, who (I warrant) has brought her back, in order that she might examine her quite at her ease.

The examination is not a very quiet one. Our dearly-beloved Aunt is somewhat more violent than becomes a grand inquisitor; and the supposed culprit does not seem to want for spirit. Now they both talk together. If I were not so intimately acquainted with the affairs of this family, I should think, that Sempronius had imported two fish-wives from Billingsgate.

The music of these two nightingales has attracted the notice of the master of the house, and he leaves his study to enjoy it more distinctly. He inquires the cause of all this uproar; but the ladies talk on without listening to him. Sempronia examines the band-box; the milliner with sarcastic politeness turns out the contents of her pockets, and begs the virgin to convince herself, that there is nothing concealed in her thimble and a silver nutmeg-grater. Now the storm

rages more violently than ever; till Sempronius bursts out like a clap of thunder, and terrifies them both into silence. He menaces the girl with his finger. He points down the street. Aye; I suppose, he threatens her with a complaint to her mistress, for she begins to look uneasy, keeps edging away towards the door, and at last appears to have considerable satisfaction in being permitted to make her escape in a whole skin.

Sempronia, however, seems more martially inclined than ever since the retreat of the enemy. She proceeds to harangue with the most violent action, heedless of her brother's impatience, while he walks up and down the room, and.... but on a sudden he stands still, and stares her full in the face, while his countenance expresses the greatest dismay and astonishment. Some important word has escaped her, which evidently has touched the master-string of his whole united sensibilities. She too seems considerably embarrassed at the hardy assertion, which has just fallen from her. She is silent: but

now she makes up her mind. She strikes her right hand closed against the open palm of her left with a look of diabolical determination, and then seizing her brother's arm, draws him back again into his study, and shuts the door.

The secret, which she is now disclosing, is clearly no trifle. How uneasy, how gloomy seems Sempronius! Now he starts from his chair, opens the door leading to the drawing-room, looks in to ascertain that nobody is there, then enters, and motions to his sister to follow him: the sweet creature does not require to be told twice: they approach Cordelia's writing desk: it is unlocked—now shame upon him! He is examining the pens, to see whether they have been used lately; while his worthy sister inspects the ink-stand, in hopes of discovering some fallen drops upon the brink of it, and feels, whether there is any remaining warmth to be perceived in the sealing wax.

They have made no discoveries, and are now returning to the study. Sempronius,

ever, comes back to the writing-table, counts the sheets of paper, in order, that s wife should carry on any correspon- e unknown to him, the deficiency of a may apprize him of the fact. Ah! my hy friend! how richly do you deserve ate, of which you are so apprehensive! am tired of this tête-à-tête. Is no- ; to be discovered in the other apart- ts? Stay! did I tell you, my dear uncle, there is an old lumber-room, which Edward's forsaken bed-chamber? As dy ever enters this place, except to store empty boxes or useless furniture, Willy re secure from interruption, and has rdingly selected it for his painting-room. he passes hour after hour in scratching daubing, and here he is established at very moment. The two coloured prints stretched against the wall, and he often nds his work to gaze in admiration the gorgeous assemblage of reds, and s, and greens, and yellows; an assem- e, however, which he is unable to rival

in his present performance; for he has emptied all his shells of paint, and has no better resource than the ink-stand.

The work is complete. He seems to be mightily pleased with it. He opens the window, and holds the piece of paper out of it, waving it backwards and forwards, in order that the ink (which he has not spared) may dry in the open air the sooner. If he would but turn himself ever so little more to the right, I should be able to favour him with my opinion of his performance. That will do, my little friend! Upon my word, very clever! I never saw a more striking resemblance! 'Tis the aunt's profile, and as ugly as life! There is no mistaking it; not a wrinkle about the corners of her little fiery eyes is omitted; the twist of her nose is hit off to a nicety, and the falling in of her toothless mouth (though perhaps rather overdone) is excellently preserved: nay, he has not forgotten even the great wart, with which her chin is decorated. To be sure it is not a flattering one, but the portrait is the very

counterpart of Nature in all her undisguised deformity. But what can have induced the young rogue to employ his pencil, or rather his pen, on such an unpromising subject? This is the first caricature, that I ever saw him attempt; and if it should fall into the hands of the original, I am afraid, that the painter's reward would by no means be of the most satisfactory nature.

He still stands before the window, and seems to be holding forth to himself. He uses a great deal of stiff action, as if he was repeating a speech out of a play. He stops, and appears embarrassed. Now he takes a book from the table, looks into it, sets it upright and open against the window, and proceeds again in his recitation with renewed spirit. I think, I can make out a G and an F.... Stay! Oh! I see—"Gay's Fables."—Every now and then he stops, and looks anxiously up the street;—'tis by that way that his aunt always comes, and this is about the time, that she usually pays her evening visit.

I have it! I have it!—He has some favour

to ask of his aunt, and hopes to bribe her to grant it by repeating a newly-acquired fable of Gay, and by shewing her, that he has past the time of her absence in retracing her beloved resemblance. Oh! poor Willy! I fear, that if such is your intention, your portrait will be thought much too like to be pleasing. It seems, by his looking so often into the street, he is not aware, that Sempronia has been in the house above this half-hour.

He begins to suspect it, for he puts his drawing into his pocket, gives a parting-look to his tawdry prints, takes up the box containing the empty colour-shells, and away he goes. The empty colour-shells? There then we have the key of the whole mystery! He is ambitious of making a picture all red and yellow, like his favourite prints; but his colour-shells must first be replenished, and this then is the favour, to obtain which, he has given himself so much trouble.

Cordelia has just returned to the drawing-room. She is already gone again. She only looked at a card which was stuck over the mantle piece, took a key from a bunch which was in the drawer of her writing-table, and immediately left the room with it.

Willy has entered the drawing-room. He has heard his aunt's voice in the adjoining closet, for he advances towards it. Probably, the tone is not encouraging, for he hesitates, and opens the door softly and by degrees, in order to reconnoitre the field of action, before he commences the attack. Sempronius looks as black as a live lobster, and his sister as red as a boiled one. Willy seems not to admire the appearance of either, and draws his little curly head back again: but his aunt is already aware of the young spy's vicinity, and before he can effect a retreat, she has taken him into custody. Now then, placing him between her knees, and com-

pelling him to look her full in the face, (how can she be so barbarous?) she insists upon his making an exact confession. Perhaps, she suspects, that his mother had sent him to overhear what she was saying to Sempronius.

The poor child weeps, and protests his innocence. Now she loses all patience, and drags him by the arm to the window, which she opens. What! Is she threatening to throw him out of it, unless he instantly confesses himself guilty? No, no; not so bad as that! She is only going to bring forward a proof of the truth of her charge so convincing, that there can be no denying it. She points to the story above; she holds a sheet of paper out of the window, and waves it, just as Willy did the portrait. She saw him then, and probably thought, that he was making signs to somebody in the street. Did she take the paper for a letter? Perhaps, too, for one written by his mother. Was there ever such a lynx in petticoats! I am half afraid, that her keen eyes will discover me with my telescope at the Garret

window, and then I shall be suspected to be the lover in this romance!—Fortunately, this business can be easily explained. Don't be so frightened, my little friend! you need only put your hand in your left pocket, and your deceiver will be confounded.

And that is exactly what he does: with trembling hands he draws forth the last production of his genius. She opens it eagerly! Nay; there is certainly no mistaking the subject, and now, Willy, now! there's a glorious subject for your pencil! Le Brun's passions exhibit nothing to be compared with it! Unluckily, she does not allow him time to study her. To tear the paper into a thousand pieces, to apply so hearty a slap on his cheek as left five white marks behind it, seize him by the arm, and turn him out of the room, slapping the door in his face, was the work of but a single minute. The unfortunate little artist retires sobbing, to mourn over the annihilation of all his air-built castles.

The closet-conference too is at an end.

Our beloved aunt has done all the mischief in her power, sees no prospect of doing more at present, and therefore takes her departure quite satisfied with herself.

I assure you, my dear uncle, I do not like the look of this business at all. Cordelia went out, just as the postman was going through the street: she sent the old footman back for something, and seized the moment of his absence to give a letter into the postman's care; there was a hurry in her manner of giving it, and she coloured so suddenly and so deeply, that I am certain, there was some mystery in the business. In all probability, this letter was an answer to that, which she received from the milliner.- I begin to grow very uneasy; it is at least certain, that Cordelia carries on a correspondence unknown to her husband, with some person in London, for it was not the general post, by which the letter was forwarded.

Sempronius is still alone in his own room. He seems in a brown study: sometimes he walks up and down the chamber rubbing his forehead with his hand thoughtfully: sometimes, he beats the devil's tattoo, sitting in his elbow chair: at this moment, he is playing upon the table with his fingers, but evidently without attending to what he is about.

Hark! a knock at his door! What! Sempronia returned so soon? It is very unusual for her to make two visits in one evening. What an air of triumph she wears! She must have done some notable mischief, she looks so happy. She puts me in mind at this moment of her proto-type Milton's Serpent:

——"Hope elevates, and Joy
Brightens her crest."——

The door opens; she goes in, but her companion remains in the street. Surely, I have seen that fellow's face before: as I hope to live, the very postman, to whom Cordelia confided her letter! He is trying a piece of money with his teeth! A bribe, no doubt,

and if the fellow received it from Sempronia, alas! for poor Cordelia's secret.

The aunt throws open the study door, and with a look of exultation slaps down a letter upon the table before her brother. He seizes it: he recognizes the hand-writing. I think, I can see his hands tremble, while he bursts the letter open.

Ha! something has fallen from the ground, which Sempronia possesses herself of without loss of time. She holds it up triumphantly to her brother. A key? Can it be that, which I saw Cordelia even now take off the ring? The same idea has struck the amiable pair, for they are already in the drawing-room. The bunch of keys is in the hands of Sempronius. The look of anguish, with which he lets the bunch fall again, tells me too plainly, that it is that very key.

Sempronia urges him to read the letter. To judge by his countenance, matters are now worse than ever. The note could have contained but a few words, for it was read in an instant, and if his sister had not

stopped him in time, in another instant he would have torn it into a thousand pieces.

I suppose, the postman is impatient, for he has just sent the maid-servant up with a message. She is gone down again with a small wax-light in her hand, which usually stands upon the chimney-piece. Sempronia picks up the bunch of keys, and replaces them in the drawer. She takes the letter from her brother and examines it. She points to the superscription with an inquiring look. He shakes his head. No; he knows nothing of the person, to whom the letter is addrest. Cordelia in secret correspondence with a person, of whom her husband knows nothing? That looks very ill!—And yet that person may be a woman. Come, my dear uncle, let us believe the best: when there are two sides of the question, I always prefer the most favourable; and to think an accused person in the right, till he is actually *proved* to be in the wrong, if not the most prudent plan as the world is constituted, at least, is certainly the most amiable.

The maid returns with the wax-taper lighted. The letter is sealed again with one of Cordelia's own seals, which lay on the writing-table. Now then away stalks Sempronia. She restores the letter to the perfidious postman, who bows, and leaves her;—and now a corner of the street deprives my eyes of the pleasure of gazing upon this paragon of female chastity.

What do you think of all this, my dear uncle? That cursed key! I am horribly afraid, that it was the key of some private entrance, of some back door, or garden-gate, and that the note specified the hour and day for using it: it could not have contained more, from the short time occupied by its perusal. If this conjecture be just, Sempronius is as well informed of these particulars, as either the writer or receiver of the letter; and by his sending it to its destination, I conclude, that he means the assignation to be kept. Is it his intention to surprize Cordelia with her unknown correspondent? It looks very like it.

At any rate, I hope, that this important interview is not fixed for this evening, as business (which cannot be delayed) compels me to desert my post this very moment, and will prevent my resuming it till to-morrow: therefore, my dear uncle, I must beg you to supply my place. I will leave you my telescope; keep a sharp look out, and then I shall at least have the satisfaction of learning from your report to-morrow, everything which has taken place in Sempronius's family during my absence.

Saturday.

And so, my dear uncle, you are quite certain, that I lost nothing by my absence yesterday evening? Nothing occurred worth noticing? Well then, let me see, whether *I* can have better success in my discoveries.

Hey-day! the old footman is at the door adjusting the stirrups of a little grey poney, and Sempronius is in the very act of drawing

on his boots. He seems preparing to go a journey. Well then, this cannot possibly be the important day, for so well informed as Sempronius is of the time of the assignation, he certainly would take care not to be out of the way: and that he does not mean to return to-night, I conclude from his carrying saddle-bags.

However, he does not leave Cordelia's "fair side all unguarded*;" for his she-dragon of a sister is just arrived, and her maid follows her, carrying a bundle of clothes. Cordelia's maid appears, and the she-dragon's abigail is given in charge to her; so that, I conjecture, the sister-in-law is appointed to keep a strict eye over Cordelia's conduct, till her brother returns. Methinks, Cordelia does not seem quite pleased with this arrangement, though she strives to hide her dissatisfaction under the veil of civilities.

N. B. The she-dragon's abigail is almost as old, and quite as hideous as her mistress;

* Comus.

ke her *more* so, was out of the power of
e.

npronius is gone. Cordelia is busied
household affairs. Our dearly-beloved
has fixed her spectacles on her hawk's
and is knitting away as if her existence
ıded upon it. This day will probably
ıproductive, but I will just look in upon
n the evening, my dear uncle.

Saturday afternoon.

ordelia is more ornamented than usual:
as a turban on with a sultana plume,
h becomes her singularly. Willy too
got his best cloaths on. There is
inly something in the wind. His
ıer is reading to him out of the large
:speare, which I mentioned before, but
inds it difficult to make him attend to
he jumps up every minute, and runs
ok out of the window.

quarter past six—stay!—have the good-

ness to hand me that news-paper, my dear uncle. Let me see—" Drury Lane—the Honey-moon."——" Covent Garden—Macbeth."—As sure as fate, they are going to see Macbeth, and Cordelia is trying to make her boy understand the story, before they set out.

Just so. A plain decent-looking coach with two ladies and a gentleman in it, has just stopped at Cordelia's door. Cordelia takes her gloves and fan. She seems through civility to press her sister-in-law to join their party. How Miss Grimalkin turns up the white of her eyes! Aye, I warrant her! She looks upon a theatre as an invention of the Wicked-one, and would as soon set her foot in purgatory as in a play-house. Cordelia and Willy leave her, and she ejaculates something as the door closes: but whether it be a prayer or a curse, I will not pretend to decide—for charity's sake, we will believe the latter.

The coach is gone, and I may as well go too: there is nobody at home but Sempro-

ınd to the shame of my taste be it
n, I have not the least inclination for a
-tête with her.—Good night, my dear

Saturday, ten o'clock.

wonder, my dear uncle, that you are
zed at my returning so unexpectedly:
ould you believe it? as I was on my
ome even now, a man past me, whom
e of his being muffled up in his great
ınd his having drawn his hat down
ıis eyes, I recognized for Sempronius!
stantly turned, and followed him. He
d at his own house, and struck thrice
ı pebble the drawing-room window, in
there was a light. Instantly the light
eared. In a minute after the door was
d without noise; the candle in her
shewed me the figure of Sempronia.
ırother stole into the house without
ng, and the door was closed again, as
as it had been opened.

Then this *is* the important moment after all! Cordelia looked at an invitation card: do'nt you recollect that circumstance? She was aware, that her husband was engaged to pass a day in the country, and appointed the evening of it for her assignation. He, on *his* side, was aware of her arrangement, and pretended to keep his country engagement, in order that he might surprize her with her lover.

Poor, poor Cordelia! To be sure, her imprudence is highly blameable, but still.... if she could but escape this once undiscovered, who knows, but the recollection of her danger might induce her to reform altogether? Stay! stay! cannot *I*.... Hang me, if I don't warn her.

Eleven o'clock.

I was too late! The play was over! Cordelia was gone, and I am returned fatigued to death.

See! see! Cordelia sits in her drawing-room. Nay, to warn her now, without making a tremendous bustle, would be impossible. She must take her chance.—Poor, poor Cordelia!

What is she about? She takes papers out of a red morocco case, which was deposited in her jewel-box; they seem to be bank-notes. Surely, she cannot be meditating an elopement? She seals them up, and leaves the room.

Sempronia is not to be seen, nor her brother. The servants are gone to bed. Every thing seems to be dark and still in the house. Surely, that confounded key was not the key of her bed-chamber? Such an imprudence would be quite unpardonable; especially as her bed-chamber is in the back part of the house, where I cannot see what goes forward.

Now would I give all that I am worth in the world (it would not be paying a very high price, heaven knows!) to ascertain what Sempronius is about at this moment!

I warrant him, he stands in some corner unobserved, (just as I am doing,) as attentive with his ears as *I* am with my eyes, listening for that which he is afraid to hear, and every instant in danger of betraying himself by the loud and anxious beating of his heart. Ah! if I am right in this conjecture, in spite of all his faults, I can't help pitying the poor miserable devil!

Ha!—how is this? A faint ray of light plays upon the glass of the lumber-room windows! This is very unusual! What can any person want at such a time of night in this desolate apartment, which hardly any one enters even during the day? Can it be Willy, whose zeal for the fine arts has induced him to leave his bed at midnight to prosecute his studies, unknown to the family? No! the shadow thrown upon the side-wall is of too great a length to be Willy's. The person, who carries the light, throws it on different parts of the chamber, as if examining, whether it is already occupied by any one. Can it be Cordelia, in this solitary

apartment.... so late at night.... her husband supposed at a distance.... expecting some one to whom she sent a private key ..... Oh! if it *is* Cordelia, she *must* be guilty!—

Guilty! Guilty!—I could discover in the shadow the peculiar form of the turban, and of the sultana plume, with which it was decorated: they were marked out most distinctly. It is she; it is Cordelia: no, never again will I pin my faith upon a woman's virtue!

The door has been left a-jar; purposely, (I suppose,) lest the lover should make a noise in opening it. I can see a faint light advancing along the landing-place. From the circular form of the radiance, I should imagine, that it is produced by a dark lanthorn. Now it enters the room, and shews me the tall figure of a man wrapped up in a great coat. It seems too, that Cordelia's maid is in her mistress's secrets; for the stranger is accompanied by a female, whose height,

shape, and white petticoats, perfectly ans
the description of Mrs. Betty.

Cordelia's rush-light is too near the v
dow, and the beams of the dark-lanthorn
both too feeble and too far off to per
my distinguishing the emotions, produ
by this mysterious meeting, on the co
tenances of the lovers; not to mention, t
the gentleman's round hat shades a gr
part of his features, and that the lady's b
is turned directly towards me: however,
eagerness with which Cordelia hastens
meet the stranger, and the tender attit
which he assumes without delay, leave
no doubt of their mutual satisfaction. H
already on his knees before her, and is pr
ing her unresisting hand to his lips most p
sionately: and this is the signal for the stc
breaking loose, which is destined to ov
whelm them. The worst fears of jealo
are confirmed beyond the power of dou
ing; mortal patience can endure no long
a closet door suddenly bursts open, and

a clap of thunder Sempronius stands in the midst of the affrighted groupe!

The whole party seems petrified, not excepting Mrs. Betty. Yes, yes, Mrs. Betty! I make no doubt, that your mistress's secret-keeper had many a pretty perquisite, but now you must prepare yourself to look about for another place.

Oh! how Sempronius storms! How he threatens the lover! How he upbraids his wife! How, with his hands clasped together, he devotes himself to the infernal deities, if he does not take most ample vengeance on the authors of his dishonor! The stranger seems to be converted into marble by this unexpected appearance, for he has not yet had the power of quitting his kneeling attitude.

Sempronius makes such an uproar, that he will soon raise the whole house. The company is already increased by two new-comers, but their stature and shape easily enable me to recognize them for old acquaintances: the one is a large water-spaniel, which I have

often seen running about the house; the other short figure, who holds a rush-light, and stands there astonished in his shirt, can be no other than Willy. I suppose, his father's voice had broken his sleep, and made him tremble, lest thieves should have found their way into the lumber-room, for the express purpose of carrying off such a treasure, as his two darling pictures.

His entrance only seems to increase the displeasure of Sempronius. I think, I can hear him cry at this distance—"What business have you out of bed, Sir?"—and at the same time he applies a hearty blow on the round cheek of poor Willy. The boy staggers under the effect of this uncivil salutation, and fearful of a second, he hastens out of the room: only in his confusion mistaking the way out, he suddenly pulls open the door of Edward's room, and.... why!—what the deuce have we got here! A *sixth* person has tumbled head foremost into the room; Willy has fallen undermost; the spaniel helps the general confusion by barking, and

has established himself on the back of the out-stretched intruder.

Willy has dragged himself from under his oppressor; he calls off the dog; raises the new-comer (who brings his garments hastily into order,) and is rewarded for his kindness by a second sound box on the ear. No, fair lady! (for it seems the intruder is a female) even if that action had not revealed you, that shape and air are not to be mistaken: you can be no other, than our dearly-beloved aunt. I suppose, the kind soul was indulging her innocent curiosity to know how the storm would end, which she had been so instrumental in raising. With this view, she concealed herself in the adjoining bedroom; and she was in the very act of listening at the key-hole with all her ears, when Willy unexpectedly pulled away the supporting door, and occasioned her to make her entrance into the society in a manner so novel and unceremonious.

This occurrence has the power of suspending even the torrent of Sempronius's resent-

ment for a moment; the seducer has now recovered the use of his faculties, and has quitted his kneeling posture. He seems disposed to make use of the present confusion, in order to effect his escape; I saw Mrs. Betty whisper him, and I guess, that it was a kind hint to seize the opportunity of withdrawing; for he pulls his hat still more over his eyes, and advances towards the door.

But Sempronius is aware of his intention; he springs after the fugitive, grasps him furiously by the arm, and forces him back into the middle of the chamber.

Now shame on the dastardly wretch—the seducer falls at the feet of the man, whom he has so grossly injured, and with uplifted hands seems to implore his compassion—and Cordelia.... I am amazed at her assurance! she walks boldly up to her husband, as if she could justify what in itself is totally unjustifiable—or is she going honestly to avow her preference for the young offender, and her determination to set her husband's anger, and the contempt of the world at defiance?

—I should rather suppose the latter; for with a confident air she extends her right hand to the kneeling stranger.... and takes the dark lanthorn out of *his*!—What is *that* for?—Hey dey! Now she pulls the seducer's hat off, throws the light full upon his face, and shows her husband.... huzza! huzza! huzza! Edward, by Heaven!

Virtuous Cordelia, what injustice have we all done you! How rejoiced am I to find myself mistaken, and Sempronius (I fancy) is by no means dissatisfied in finding a banished son, where he expected to find a favoured lover! It is at least certain, that he does not withdraw the hand which Edward has seized, and is in the act of pressing to his lips; and what makes me confident that his features have relaxed something of their severity is, that Mrs. Betty is disposed to profit by the present moment to obtain absolution for her own share in the business, and without more ceremony she plumps down on her knees, close by Edward.—And now Cordelia turning the

lanthorn away from Edward's face, and throwing the light full upon her suppliant abigail's, discovers, (not the features of Mrs. Betty,) but those of a girl, not more than seventeen, and lovely as the virgins of Mahomet's fabled paradise.

This then was the object of this midnight conference.—While we fancied Edward many hundred miles distant from London, love had forbade his wandering further than the residence of his beloved: and for what purpose he sought it is now made quite evident, for he holds up the left hand of the fair stranger, and points to the ring, which ornaments the wedding finger—this important step once taken, he communicated it to his adopted mother; he entreated permission to make known to her the bride of his selection (perhaps) before he set forward to seek with her his fortune through the world.—This request must certainly have been conveyed in the supposed love-letter, brought by the milliner's girl; the short space of time occupied

in the perusal of her answer, (as I said before,) proved, that it only contained a few words, probably nothing more than the time and place of meeting; and as Sempronius was ignorant of the address on the back, Edward must have taken the precaution of desiring his step-mother to direct to him under a feigned name, fearful lest his father by some accident should discover his being still in the metropolis, and prevent Cordelia from granting the so much desired meeting.—The conversation which succeeded her return from the country, left me no doubt, that all intercourse between his wife and son had been prohibited by the stern Sempronius; Cordelia was obliged to have recourse to mystery, however innocent her purpose; and the neglected lumber-room (as being least liable to observation from the servants) was fixed upon as the most fit place for the interview, at which she proposed not only to embrace her step-son's wife as her adopted daughter, but to smooth the difficulties of

their road through life, by giving the new-married couple all the pecuniary assistance which it lay in her power to command. It was for this purpose, that she sealed up the bank-notes so carefully; it was for this .... but while I am making these reflections, a most animated conference has taken place between the undeceived Sempronius and his amiable sister—he seems to reproach her and her misrepresentations for having practised upon his foibles, and rendered him so unjust to his wife, so harsh to his son, so contemptible in the eyes of them both, and even of himself.—But the fair accused one does not listen to his remonstrances without evident signs of displeasure. She enters upon her defence with the more warmth, the less there is reason upon her side—he rejoins—she replies—with every moment their expostulations grow more vehement.—But now Cordelia interposes like an angel of peace, gently places one white hand before the lips of her incensed husband, and extends the other in sign of amity to

her embarrassed sister-in-law. It is received with an air of overstrained humility, that shows Miss Grimalkin would still be impertinent, if she dared; and now she thinks it full as well to take her departure, courtseying all around her repeatedly and down to the very ground, and taking care to display all those signs of ironical civility, which convert the compliment into an insult.—Now she has reached the door, and turning her back most heroically upon the company with all the majesty of a turkey-cock, she gratifies me with her absence.—Good night; thou model of stale virginity! Sleep soundly upon your well-earned laurels, and may your dreams be as sweet as your temper!

With her departure from our horizon, all clouds seem to vanish. Her brother appears to be grown quite another man—his brow is so clear, his countenance is so much brightened, and his whole attitude expreses, that he feels so much more at his ease!—Now he embraces his charming wife, and that repentant kiss entreats her pardon of his unjust sus-

picions.—Now he extends the hand of paternal forgiveness to his son, who presses it to his bosom with enthusisasm—and now when Edward leads the partner of his heart towards him, does he not fold her to his bosom with all the tenderness of a father?—Oh! how lovely appears this scene of domestic reconciliation, though acted in an old lumber-room, and only viewed by the unsteady glimmerings of a rush-light and a dark lanthorn!—

You may as well lay down your pen, my dear uncle; there is nothing more to be seen—or if there were, I could not see it, till the tears are wiped away, which have dimmed my telescope.—And now, thou happy family, for to-night farewell!—Here I lay down the office of your historian: and having now been for above two months Edward's most intimate confident and warmest friend, to-morrow I'll set myself at work to become his acquaintance.

FINIS.

BILL JONES;

A TALE OF WONDER.

" Murder may pass unpunished for a time,
But tardy justice still o'er-takes the crime:
And oft a speedier pain the guilty feels;
The hue and cry of Heaven pursues him at the heels."

DRYDEN.

BILL JONES!

[*For some curious particulars respecting this Tale, v. the article intitled* "Bill Jones," *in the Preface.*]

—"Now well-a-day!" the sailor said,
"Some danger must impend!
Three ravens sit in yonder glade,
And harm will happen, I'm sore afraid,
Ere we reach our journey's end."—

—"And what have the ravens with *us* to do?
Does their sight then bode us evil?"—
"Why, to find *one* raven is lucky, it's true;
But it's certain misfortune to light on *two*,
And meeting with *three* is the devil!

" I've known full threescore years go by,
And only twice before
I've seen three ravens near me fly;
And twice good cause to wish had I,
That I ne'er might see them more.

" The first time, I was wrecked at sea;
The second time by fire
I lost my wife and children three
That self-same night; and woe is me,
That I did not then expire!

" Still do I hear their screams for aid,
Which to give was past man's power!
I saw in earth their coffins laid.....
Well! my heart of marble must be made,
Since it did not break that hour!"—

—" Poor soul, your tale of many woes
Brings tears into my eyes:
But think you then, such ills arose,
Because you saw your fancied foes
Three ravens near you rise?

" No doubt, since this fantastic fear
Has thus possesst your head,
You firmly believe, that ghosts appear,
And that dead men rise from the blood-stained bier
To haunt the murderer's bed?"—

—" Believe it, master? well I may!
Now mark, what I'll relate;
For gospel-true are the words I say,
When I swear, that during three weeks and a day,
A ghost was my own ship-mate!

" My cash ran low; no beef, no flip,
And the times were hard to live;
So I e'en resolved to make a trip
For slaves on board of a Guinea-ship,
Which crime may God forgive!

" Oh! it's a sad, sad thing to hear
The negroes scream and groan,
And curse the billows, which bear them near
To the tyrant white-man's land of fear,
And far, far away from their own.

" But soon the sailor found his part
Scarce better than the slave's;
For our captain had a tyger's heart,
And he plagued his crew with such barbarous art,
We all wished us in our graves.

" We scarce were two days' sail from port,
Ere many a back was flayed;
He flogged us oft in wanton sport;
His heart was of stone, not flesh—In short,
He was fit for *such* a trade!

" Though each in turn was treated ill,
'Mongst all the crew alone
Bill Jones opposed our tyrant's will;
For Bill was cross, and old, and still
He'd give him back his own.

" And many a brutal harsh command
Old Bill had grumbled at,
Till once he was ordered a sail to hand,
When Bill was so weak that he scarce could stand;
But the Captain scoffed at that.

" For a 'lazy old brute' poor Bill he abused,
And he forced him aloft to go;
But their duty to do his limbs refused,
And at length from the ropes his hands Bill loosed,
And he fell on the deck below.

" Towards him straight the Captain flew,
Crying—" Dog, dost serve me so?"—
And with devilish spite his sword he drew,
And he ran Bill Jones quite through and through,
And the blow was a mortal blow.

" At the point of death poor Bill now lies,
And stains the deck with gore;
And fixing his own on his murderer's eyes,
—' Captain, alive or dead,' he cries,
' I'll never leave you more!'—

—"'You wont?' says the Captain; 'time will show,
If you keep your word or not;
For now in the negro-kettle below,
Old dog, your scoundrel limbs I'll throw,'
And I'll see, what fat you've got!'—

"So he caused the cook make water hot,
And the corpse, both flesh and bones,
(To see what fat Bill Jones had got,)
The Captain boiled in the negro-pot;
But there wasn't *much* fat in Jones.

"If well his word the Captain kept,
Bill Jones kept his as well;
For just at midnight, all who slept,
With one consent from their hammocks leapt,
Roused by a dreadful yell.

"Never was heard a more terrible sound!
Fast to the deck we hied;
And there by the moon-beam's light we found
The murdered man, in spite of his wound,
Sitting close by the steerman's side.

"And from that hour among the rest,
Bill served, nor left us more;
With bloody trowsers, bloody vest,
And bloody shirt, and bloody breast,
Still he stood our eyes before;

289839B

" And he'd clean the deck, or fill the pail,
Or he'd work with right good will
To stop a leak or to drive a nail;
But whenever the business was *handing a sail*,
Then *specially* ready was Bill.

" And to share in all things with the crew
Did the spectre never miss;
And when to the cook for his portion due
Each sailor went, Bill Jones went too,
And tendered his platter for *his*.

" His face looked pale; his limbs seemed weak;
His footsteps fell so still,
That to hear their sound you'd vainly seek;
And to none of the crew did Bill eër speak,
And none of us spoke to Bill.

" But when three weeks had crept away
Just as you now have heard,
The Captain came on deck one day;
And quoth he, 'My lads, I've something to say;
Bill Jones is as good as his word.

" 'He never leaves me day nor night!
He haunts me, haunts me still!
By the midnight lamp I see the spright,
And when at morn the sky grows light,
The first sunbeam shows me Bill.

" 'At meals, his pale lips speak the grace,
His cold hand gives the wine:
At every hour, in every place,
To which ever side I turn my face,
Bill's eyes are fixed on mine!

" 'Now, lads, my resolution's made;
One means will set me free,
And Bill's pursuit for ever evade.....
He comes! he comes! then away!'—he said,
And plunged into the sea.—

" None moved a joint the wretch to save!
All stood with staring eyes!
Each clasped his hands! a groan each gave!
When lo! on a sudden above the wave
Once more did the Captain rise.

" Fixt and fearful was his eye,
And pale as a corpse his brow,
And we saw him clap his hands on high,
And we heard him scream with a terrible cry,
—'By God! Bill's with me *now!*'—

" Then down he sank through the foaming flood
To Hell, that worst of havens!—
Now, Heaven preserve you, Master good,
From perilous rage, and from innocent blood,
And from meeting with *three* ravens!"

AMORASSAN,

OR

The Spirit of the Frozen Ocean.

AN ORIENTAL ROMANCE.

—"Heaven's Sovereign spares all creatures but himself
That hideous sight, a naked human heart."—

YOUNG.

AMORASSAN;

OR

The Spirit of the Frozen Ocean;

CHAP. I.

"Still o'er these scenes my fancy wakes,
And fondly broods with miser-care:
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

BURNS.

FROM the very depth of his soul did Muzaffer, the Grand Vizir, detest the poor wandering Hebrew, Ben Hafi. He knew well how to manage the strings of the Caliph's heart, and resolved, that not one should remain unsounded, till the destruction of this hated stranger was accomplished. But here

for the first time he found his arts baffled; a proof, that rectitude of mind, and innate goodness of heart, are such celestial and enduring gifts, that although they may be sometimes overpowered by guile and falsehood, they can never be entirely destroyed.

The Caliph listened attentively, paused for some minutes, and then replied by the question—" What harm has Ben Hafi done? whom has he injured?"—

Muzaffer was of opinion, " that Ben Hafi was universally considered as a dangerous person; that there was a mystery about the man, which at the best wore a very suspicious appearance; and that although, in truth, he had as yet done no harm, perhaps, he was only waiting for an opportunity to effect his evil designs with the more security."

THE CALIPH.

Perhaps so.... and perhaps not! Allah, who reads the hearts of Ben Hafi, of you,

and of myself, alone knows what he *means* to do: we, Muzaffer, will content ourselves with knowing what he has already done. Since his arrival in my dominions, no fault has been found in his conduct; if any could have been found, you, Vizir, (I am well assured) would not have failed to find it. The man is charitable, modest, wise: and does not my faithful dwarf Megnoun think well of him? Ah! he, of whom my good little deaf Megnoun thinks well, can never be a worthless man! for the spirit of truth resides in the heart of Megnoun, the arrows of discernment shoot from his brilliant eyes, and therefore needs he not the sense of hearing. Allah has taken from him in one respect, but has given to him most bounteously in another. He conceives the meanings of men from their looks, from movements of their lips, to us imperceptible; he decyphers their thoughts expressed by the sinking or falling of the eye-brow, or the momentary play of the muscles of the mouth; he reads the heart

through the bosom, and his eye pierces as deep, as is permitted to mortal man. Oh! had I but always valued the advice of my good Megnoun as it deserved, how different would have been my situation now! My brother, my Abdallah, would have still been at my court, and I should still have possest a real friend! When all conspired to blind me.... when my senses were bewildered by calumnies, whose falsehood I discovered too late, and whose author I still seek in vain.... then did no voice speak in favor of Abdallah, none but Megnoun's! But I scorned the warning of the honest creature; my eyes were dazzled by the splendor of my newly-mounted throne; my ears were filled with flattery; and I shut my heart against my brother. Oh! when I remember, while our father was yet in life, what an affectionate friend, what a cheerful companion, what a disinterested adviser, what virtues and what talents once were mine in Abdallah; and how from the moment that I mounted the throne, I repulsed him

with that haughty coldness, which by you and by my courtiers, was termed necessary prudence; and how [oh! that was unjust, was tyrannical, was barbarous!] and how I judged him to be guilty without hearing his defence!..... oh! Muzaffer, when I recollect all this, most heartily do I wish that *I* had been the younger brother, and that Abdallah had borne the sceptre in my place. I should have gained by the exchange, both in this world, and the next; for I swear to you, Muzaffer, by the eternal splendor of Heaven, that had *he* been Caliph, Abdallah would not have condemned his brother unheard. No, he would not; for the actions of Abdallah were as just as his affections were tender; his head was as wise as his heart was good!

MUZAFFER.

Mighty Lord, remember that Abdallah was *not* condemned by you; circumstances, whose illusion (as you say) you have since discovered, compelled you to

believe him guilty; but before you could adjudge his doom, he avoided your sentence by a disgraceful and suspicious flight.

THE CALIPH.

Muzaffer, you are generally skilful in pouring balsam into the wounds of my bosom; but this is too deep an ulcer, and defies your art. You succeed no farther than in scarring it over, but the slightest emotion is able to rend it open anew.

MUZAFFER.

The too great sensibility of your heart, the over-stretched gentleness of your nature, were ever your greatest torments. Methinks, by this time, your every day's experience, how little men deserve to excite such feelings, and how little gratitude is returned by your subjects, might have taught you.....

THE CALIPH.

And even allowing, that men are unde-

erving, and that my subjects are ungrateful, what have I done to deserve their gratitude? It's true, my throne would be delightful as a bower in paradise, were I permitted to be as beneficent as it is my wish to be: but 'tis you who convert it into a bed of thorns, by still convincing me, that it is necessary to act with coldness and rule with severity. Be it so; but for that coldness and severity, Vizir, must you answer at the day of judgment, since He who reads the heart, knows well, how foreign and how hateful they are to mine. Perhaps, your lessons of government are correct, but Abdallah's were very different.

MUZAFFER.

And 'tis that very circumstance, mighty Lord, which makes me suspect, that the maintenance of your government was not sincerely wished by Abdallah: nay, which makes me even still doubt the reality of those discoveries, by which you suppose his innocence to be so fully proved. If the Prince

was conscious of no fault, why did he betake himself to flight?

THE CALIPH.

He was compelled to fly; to fly from his brother: he fled to preserve his life.... perhaps to preserve his brother from the commission of a crime! Oh! where is he now? In what miserable hut does he now hunger, while I revel here in superfluity, and lavish away the treasures of Arabia? In vain have my messengers traversed the globe: no vestige of my brother can be found!—Perhaps, he already appears as my accuser before the Eternal's throne, and the spirit of my father stands at his side! He is revenged! Better, far better would it be for me to suffer what *he* has suffered, than what *I* am doomed to suffer now. The unjust monarch sits on his golden throne, and his heart is bleeding; but the blooming gardens of the Prophet are open to the unjustly persecuted, and the fairest bower in paradise becomes his everlasting abode!"—

The Grand Vizir had heard these lamentations so often, and had always combated these reflections with so little success, that he at length made it a rule, whenever his sovereign touched upon this subject, to let him talk as long as he pleased, and content himself with listening in silence. He only now and then endeavoured to mark the interest, which he did *not* feel, by a sympathetic sigh, a melancholy movement of the head, or a look of pious resignation cast towards Heaven.... or rather towards the ceiling.

After a pause, the Caliph resumed his discourse—" But the lot is cast, and there is no recalling it. I have thrown away my natural friend—now I must be content to seek a friend in any one, towards whom my vacant heart feels an inclination. It's true, you assure me, (and indeed my own experience has sufficiently convinced me of the veracity of your assurance) that the Caliph can only be loved for the sake of the influence and wealth, which it is in the power of his friendship to bestow. I can-

not change the nature of mankind; imperfect as they are made, such must I be content to take them. All that I now desire is this: that those on whom I bestow wealth and influence, should employ them to the advantage of my people, and that they should still remember, that the ministers to whom their indulgent sovereign confides his power, if they misuse it, are doubly culpable in the eyes of God and man."—

Here for this time the conversation ended: but it was not long before the Vizir brought Ben Hafi on the carpet again. He had frequently found, that when he could make the Caliph heartily weary of a subject by frequently dwelling upon and repeating it, his master was glad to free himself from the persecution, by giving up the point. However, he always took special care to manage the business in such a manner, that the Commander of the faithful believed, either that he gave his consent from his own free will and better judgment, or that he made an heroic sacrifice of the feelings of

is heart to his love of justice and the severe uties of his exalted station.

Expecting similar success in the present inance, he again prest the Caliph on the subct of Ben Hafi: but the event did not anver his expectation. Amurath was proof gainst all his attacks, and at length asked im—"whether he was in truth afraid of e influence of this poor simple Hebrew?"— he Vizir's answer was a contemptuous mile.—

—"Then why are you so much his eneay?"— rejoined the Caliph: "trust me, uzaffer, it does not please me, when you xpress such aversion against a man, whose onversation has beguiled your sovereign f so many heavy hours. Ben Hafi's Tales, nd descriptions of various countries and he manners which prevail in them, furnish e with much amusement while he is with e, and with much matter for reflection hen I am alone. Often in discourse with him ave I forgotten myself; and he who makes monarch forget the sorrows of a throne,

trust me, Muzaffer, can be no common man."—

They were here interrupted by the little deaf Megnoun, whom the Caliph had ordered to summon the Hebrew to the seraglio: the portal curtains were drawn back, and Ben Hafi entered.

The sun, when at mid-day he shines upon the ocean, is not brighter than the smile with which Muzaffer greeted Ben Hafi: the song of the nightingale, when he wooes the rose is not sweeter than the tone, in which he bade him welcome. Oh! at that moment how Muzaffer must have hated him!—Ben Hafi was seated on cushions arranged opposite to the Caliph's sopha; the dwarf took his accustomed station at his master's feet: and now the Grand Vizir seemed by a respectful bow to request permission to break silence. The permission was granted, and he thus addressed the object of his aversion and his fear.

—"Worthy and wise Ben Hafi, there is a point (and that a point of no light import

ice) on which our Lord the Caliph has long ffered from the humblest of his slaves, and hich I have obtained his authority to sub- it to your experience in the nature of man- nd. I maintain, that a sovereign, who has o other materials to work upon, and no her instrument to work with, than men, ust govern his actions entirely according to ie dictates of cool and unbiassed *prudence*, id without suffering himself to be in ie least influenced by that most danger- us of all delusions, which is no less er- oneous than dazzling—the *enthusiasm* of ie heart. I maintain, that that govern- ient only can be of use to the *whole*, which grounded upon a knowledge of the epravity, the baseness, the selfishness, the icapacity of the individuals, of whom that hole is composed: and that all those plans ust come to nothing, which are built upon he idea of ruling men through the medium f their good qualities; which aim at substi- uting the rewards of virtue for the dread of unishment; and whose foundation rests

upon the belief, that to keep a kingdom in order and tranquillity, and render a people happy and contented, it is only necessary for a sovereign's views to be those of equity, benevolence, and foresight. I maintain also that the black drop, which the angel Gabriel removed from the heart of Mahomet, exists in the hearts of all other children of Allah; that on account of this innate depravity, the sovereign must possess a sceptre of iron, as well as a sceptre of gold; that he will oftener find it necessary to use the first than the second: and that true wisdom will make him consider man merely as an animal, who must be compelled to do that which is useful, and abstain from that which is pernicious; the one, by his passion for pleasure, the other, by his fear of pain.

"Such are my sentiments; I have the misfortune to find them disapproved of by my Lord the Caliph, and but too often have the still greater misfortune to see him act from sentiments in direct opposition to them."—

THE CALIPH.

And if your opinion were just, Muzaffer, why in the name of Ali, did nature give the king a heart as well as the beggar? In order to rule as you would have him, and yet not be the most miserable of earthly beings, a monarch should be born without the feelings of a man.

MUZAFFER.

The feelings of a man and the duties of a monarch are always different and always incompatible.

THE CALIPH.

If that be the case, I pity both; but most the monarch!—To dare confide in no one.... to be deaf to the pleadings of benevolence.... to repress all warm affections, all generous sensibilities, and to shut our bosoms against the whole world, at the very moment when the heart overflows towards the whole world with love, with friendship, with philanthropy .... always to threaten.... always to punish

. . . . always to be an object of alarm and aversion. . . . to be cursed for all the ill that happens. . . . to resign to ministers all the merit of the good which is done. . . . to delight in conferring happiness, and yet to be obliged to resign the power of conferring happiness into the hands of others. . . . oh! if this be indeed the lot of a sovereign, his lot is a dreadful one!—

Lord of creation! unless you weigh my conduct by the measure of my good intentions, how shall thy servant stand upright before thee!

BEN HAFI.

Doubt it not, Commander of the true believers! at the last great day, our actions will be judged, not according to their consequences, but according to the views with which they were committed.

THE CALIPH.

I trust so, Ben Hafi; and therefore I will not repine, that my seat is a throne, rather

than a couch of straw. On the throne, as well as in the peasant's hut, it is still possible to be virtuous; and surely the rewards of virtue will hereafter be proportioned according to the difficulty, which its possessor found in retaining it. Were not this the case, alas! how much to be pitied would be the Great-ones of the earth!—

But we have wandered from Muzaffer's dispute with me. Tell me, Ben Hafi, (and speak without reserve,) is it better, that a man.... [you hear that I say a *man*, and not a *monarch*, for in spite of all my Vizir's arguments, I cannot help flattering myself, that they are the same]—is it, I say, better that a man should act according to the warmth and enthusiasm of his heart, or that he should merely obey the dictates of that cold discretion, which, before a step is taken, weighs its merits in the nicest balance, and examines it with the severest scrutiny?

Do not answer, that the right thing is to make a proper use of both; I know that already.—But I wish you to decide between

two people, who seldom can make prudence and enthusiasm walk hand in hand.—Muzaffer sees me act imprudently without thinking of any thing but how to confer pleasure, and then he shakes his head: on the other hand I see him act discreetly without caring whether he inflicts pain, and then I feel, that my heart is bleeding. Both of us are in the wrong; but which of us is most so?"—

Ben Hafi paused for a few moments—at length he raised his head, and the genius of inspiration sparkled in his expressive eyes.

—"Commander of the faithful!" said he, "the life of an illustrious person, who still exists, will be the best answer to your important question.—Am I permitted to relate his adventures?"—

—"By all means, Ben Hafi," answered the Caliph, "and you shall have not merely my permission, but my thanks; your narratives please me well, especially when they are wonderful; and if any spirits or genii should appear in the course of your story, they will

be extremely welcome, and I shall like your discourse the better—that is, provided always, that your story be no fiction.—And now then, begin your narrative, my good Ben Hafi."—

The Hebrew bowed his head, and commenced his tale as follows.

CHAP. II.

—"Ah! if those dreams fallacious prove,
Which paint the world so fair;
If Heaven has placed for virtuous love
No blest asylum there;
If men fair fame, fair faith deride,
Bent on those crooked paths, which guide
To Interest's sordid shrine,
Be yours, ye gloomy sons of woe,
The melancholy truth to know,
The dream of bliss be mine."—

MERCER.

THE words of power were spoken, and a thick grey cloud came rolling from the north. In its passage over the mountain Caucasus, its shadow fell on the pavillion of mortal excellence, and immediately the bright picture was obscured, on which the Genius Gela-Eddin was gazing.

The roof of this brilliant pavillion is formed of moonshine; the golden columns on which it rests are beams of the sun, and in number a thousand and thirty: its walls are composed of woven æther, meteor-fires, and the condensed evaporations of aromatic shrubs and flowers. A profusion of falling stars is showered over the whole pavillion, and it floats upon the clouds of autumnal evenings, which form for it a floor of the most brilliant crimson.

This is the abode of the spotless and generous spirits of those, who while on earth dignified and enlightened human nature by their virtues, and who have purchased for themselves after death a seat in the society of the pure Genii, by their glorious actions and by self-devotion to the general good.

Gela-Eddin, a superior Genius, equally endowed with the love and the light of truth, is the happy ruler of these illustrious spirits.

On the ethereal walls of this pavillion are continually represented every noble and vir-

tuous action, from the first instant of its suggesting itself to the moment of its completion. Nothing can be more brilliant, nothing more soft than the colours of which these pictures are composed; unlike those of earth, instead of fading they become more bright and fresh with each succeeding day, except when the celestial motive which animates their authors is obscured and tarnished by weakness, apprehension, self-interest, indolence, uncertainty respecting the consequences, or reflection on the little merits of those for whose benefit the noble action is intended.

But when a mortal even to the moment of dissolution remains faithful to the heavenly inspiration, which incites him to glorious deeds; when the lamp of his life in expiring still throws forth a flame, which warms and enlightens posterity with the remembrance of his virtues, then does the whole pavillion blaze with celestial radiance! The reflection of this sacred shining light pierces through the thick vapours, which compose our atmos-

phere, and illumines the horizon with a soft trembling glow. The pilgrim stops, and gazes in rapture on the lovely vision; the ignorant man of wisdom affixes to it some unmeaning name, and leaves the matter just where he found it; and the natural philosopher accounts for the phœnomenon falsely, and astonishes his auditor at the profundity of his science.

The setting sun poured its lustre through the transparent pavillion, gilded its roof and pavement, and illuminated the pictures on the walls of æther. The spirits of the pure enjoyed in silent rapture the sight of the glorious actions of the good on earth: when suddenly the airy fabric trembled to its very base, a chilling wind breathed through the pavillion, and the words of power ascended from the rolling globe beneath.

The spirits of the pure veiled their heads in sorrow; for at that moment the picture, which displayed the conduct of one of the noblest of their earthly brethren, grew dim upon the brilliant wall.

The Genius Gela-Eddin approached the pavillion's entrance, extended his wand, and arrested the further progress of the grey and frozen cloud.

—"Who art thou?" inquired Gela-Eddin; "by whom art thou summoned, and on what business?"—

A voice issued from the midst of the cloud—"Powerful Gela-Eddin! I am a spirit of the frozen ocean; one of those, who inhabit the islands of chillness and gloom; who sometimes, careless of all sublunary things, float in the atmosphere, which every where surrounds and supports the earth, and at other times descend into the lower restless whirling air which mortals breathe, at once to govern and obey them; who are by turns their slaves and rulers, their enemies and friends; who now injure them, now benefit; but who equally in benefits or injuries feel for them neither love nor hate."—

Gela-Eddin.—And whither is thy course addrest? Why hast thou left thy gloomy islands?

The Voice.—Amorassan summons me, and I dare not resist his voice: he calls me in the name of Solomon the powerful and the wise!

Gela-Eddin.—Amorassan? the Grand Vizir of Guzurat? the friend and favorite of its Sultan? who has hitherto trod that crooked slippery path with steps so bold and steady? how can the glowing heart of Amorassan ever have desired *thy* aid?

The Voice.—His heart is wounded by the perverseness and treachery of mankind; he is disappointed by the worthlessness of those, with whom he is destined to exist, and for whose welfare he has till now still lived and laboured: he, who has hitherto undertaken every right action, merely because he felt that it *was* right, will now weigh his proceedings, not by their motive but only by their consequences: keen foresight, exact judgment, and justice impartial and severe, must henceforth freeze the ardour of his feelings, and overpower the voice of his heart. But, hark! the charm is repeated!

the powerful words ascend even to the clouds!—Mighty Gela-Eddin, delay my flight no longer!—

The Genius sighed, as he dropt his wand, and a tear glittered in his eye, when he saw the grey cloud hover over the palace of Amorassan.

THE CALIPH.

My good Ben Hafi, before we quit this wonderful pavillion, I cannot help saying, that I never remember to have observed the brilliant show in the skies, which according to your account displays itself upon the reception of a mortal into the society of those same pure spirits. During the whole time that I have been upon the throne, not once have I witnessed such a sight. Does this proceed from my own want of observation? Perhaps the chief persons of my kingdom have done nothing worthy of being represented on those ethereal walls. Alas! men must still be men—it is not in the power of a mere man to mend them!

MUZAFFER.

Permit me to inquire, whether the evil deeds of mortals, as well as their good, were not also represented on the walls of this pavillion?

THE CALIPH.

Allah protect us! No, to be sure not, Muzaffer! Why, if all the wicked and foolish things which are done on earth, were to be represented, the very vault of heaven itself would not be able to contain them!— But now then, Hafi, let us hear more about this Amorassan; I am curious to know, what made the Genius sigh so piteously on his account; for I protest, at present his resolution appears to me to be a very wise one.

CHAP. III.

—"A thousand glorious systems he designed;
A thousand great ideas filled his mind;
But with the clouds they fled, and left no trace behind."
THOMSON.

BEN HAFI.

AMORASSAN, the Grand-Vizir of Guzurat, was such a man..... as grand-vizirs seldom are. He was his master's favorite, and yet was he more the friend of the people than the servant of the monarch: he governed every thing, and yet was he less anxious for the glory of the kingdom, than for the happiness of those whom it contained: he was Grand-Vizir, and yet he valued his place more, because it enabled him to produce the welfare of the Sultan's subjects, than because

it furnished him with opportunities to preserve the Sultan's favour; though it was to that favour alone that he was indebted for his place, and that he could expect to preserve it. In short, he was the minister of Guzurat, not of its Sultan.

THE CALIPH.

Stop one moment, Ben Hafi: do you recollect, that I requested you to introduce no fiction in your narrative? It requires a large portion of confidence in your veracity to believe the existence of such a man as this Amorassan; and even if there should be such a man as this, how could he ever come to be a Grand-Vizir? He seems to me totally unfit for the situation; and though I heartily wish, that *my* Grand-Vizir shoud be as anxious for the good of my people as for my own, yet were I in the place of this Sultan of Guzurat, I am not certain, that I should be quite pleased to hear my Grand-Vizir call himself more the people's minister, than mine: at least, if I *were* quite pleased, I must

be in an uncommonly good humour at the time, that is certain.

MUZAFFER.

Aye! aye! Such a Grand-Vizir is only good in a tale.

THE CALIPH.

And why should he not be good *out* of a tale? Trust me, Muzaffer, were *you* to think like this Amorassan, I should not be at all displeased; provided always, that you kept in memory, that you are totally dependent on my sole will and pleasure, and that the same breath which has elevated you to the highest office, can degrade you again to the very lowest!

BEN HAFI.

Even that thought inspired Amorassan with no fear.

THE CALIPH.

No? What then *did* he fear?

BEN HAFI.

To act unjustly.

THE CALIPH.

When Abdallah was here, there was one in my court who thought so too! Ah! that is past!—Proceed, Ben Hafi.

BEN HAFI.

Amorassan, Commander of the Faithful, was one of those men, who, inflamed with enthusiastic admiration of the good and fair, are capable of undertaking and executing plans, whose accomplishment seems to require the life of an anti-deluvian. Such a man is seldom happy; nay, to prevent his being totally miserable, it requires him to possess firmness enough to forgive every fault in others, while he excuses none in himself: it requires, that his experience in the nature of those, *with* whom, and *for* whom he labours, should produce no more effect upon his heart and temper, than vapours produce upon the sun; which can do

no more than obtrude themselves between the planetary sovereign and the human eye in the form of clouds, and which soon, overcome by his warmth, fall down again in fruitful showers to freshen and fertilize the earth.

The man, who can persevere with unabated ardour in labouring for the good of human kind, in spite of every day's conviction of human depravity, that man alone is perfect. Such a man would I gladly see, but the world has never seen one yet.

Amorassan's heart was the most tender, his sympathy the most warm, his courage the most undaunted, his activity the most indefatigable: he wished ardently what was right, and he no sooner perceived that good might be done, than he hastened to do it. But he, who hurries on with too much eagerness and rapidity, is frequently apt to overshoot the goal, and by not allowing himself time to take every necessary precaution, he sometimes runs the risque of failing in his object: he cannot do everything himself; he must employ agents, whom he finds

it difficult to inspire with the same enthusiastic ardour for the execution of his benevolent projects, which animated their projector when he formed them: nay, sometimes, he will find himself counteracted by those very agents, because they find his plan conducive to the general good, but tending to their individual disadvantage. Amorassan believed, that could he only prove, that his schemes aimed at the universal benefit, self-interest would induce mankind to forward their execution: he was not aware, that the universal good is an object too remote and too uncertain to excite very warm sensibilities, and that few men act with ardour and spirit in affairs, with which their personal and particular advantage is not in some degree connected. Amorassan thought, that when he had found men *able* enough to execute his schemes, everything was done; their own common sense would be sufficient to make them *willing*. So erroneous did he find this opinion, that much, which he had designed in the true spirit and with all the fire of the

most extensive philanthropy, was so marred in the execution, that he started back appalled at the sight of his disfigured work, and found that he had earned curses, where he had sowed blessings with such labour and such care.

Amorassan, however, was not of so weak a mind, as to be easily driven from his glorious career by difficulties or disappointments. The consciousness of his good intentions consoled him; and the Sultan did him justice, even when both the court and the country murmured.

This Sultan [his name was Ibrahim] was in truth a very good kind of man: his greatest fault was, that he was totally dependent on those, who possest his confidence. His heart was warm and susceptible; his imagination was easily inflamed, and he was possest by a most inordinate desire to obtain renown. The enlarged and glorious plans of his Grand-Vizir dazzled and enchanted him; and there were moments, when in the warmth of his enthusiasm for virtue he would have obeyed

Amorassan, even had he been advised by him to exchange his throne for the cell of a dervise. The love of virtue, the abhorrence of vice, the sacrifice of self; philanthropy to wish, resolution to decide, and vigour to execute; all these were communicated to him by Amorassan; but that which alone could give duration to these qualities, he did not possess from nature, and Amorassan could not impart it:—the Sultan had no firmness of character.

Yet this defect was not only a secret to the Sultan himself, but even to his minister. The former adopted all the sentiments, and entered into all the ideas of the latter with such ardour, that both were equally delighted with the apparent sympathy: yet in truth, not one of these ideas and sentiments originated with the Sultan. He only echoed back with enthusiasm in the evening, what he heard from Amorassan with such pleasure in the morning; and while the one employed, and the other witnessed the same language, the same looks, and the same ges-

tures, neither suspected, that the Sultan's share in the business was a mere effort of recollection, in which the head and the heart had but very little concern.

Among the courtiers, by whom the throne of Guzurat was surrounded, Ebu-Beker, the son of the late Chief-Cadi, was numbered. The Sultan neither loved nor esteemed him, but his society was agreeable to him; and I have heard persons conversant in the arts of courts affirm, that to inspire this sentiment is the surest means of reaching preferment. The friend or the favourite must inspire a degree of enthusiasm, which becomes insipid unless it increases daily, and which, when it has reached a certain height, can increase no further: attachment then gradually cools into esteem; enthusiasm subsides; defects become visible, and the sovereign feels disappointed. But the man, who is merely suffered as an agreeable companion, and who pretends to nothing more than to amuse, gradually and imperceptibly continues to rise in favour; till his society becomes a habit,

and the prince finds it so necessary, that it is impossible for him to do without it.

Of all this Ebu-Beker was well convinced. He therefore never transgressed the bounds prescribed to him; professed on all occasions the most profound admiration of the Sultan; and by throwing himself into the shade, contrived to make his master's merits shine with the greater lustre. This conduct was highly agreeable to the person, whom it was designed to please. In Amorassan's company, Ibrahim could not help being conscious that he was inferior to his minister: in Ebu-Beker's, he was exalted in his own opinion, and he felt grateful to the author of this agreeable sensation. It's true, he had still no great opinion of Ebu-Beker's talents; but he gave him credit for what was a much higher merit in his opinion—i. e. the most unbounded admiration of the Sultan's own exalted person.

Ibrahim's attachment to his minister, however, had as yet suffered no diminution: he still considered him as the firmest support

of his throne, as the brightest ornament of his court, as the most active instrument for promoting the welfare of his people, and consequently of their sovereign. Nothing, therefore, was less agreeable to Ibrahim than to find fault with his friend, or put a negative upon the benevolent plans, which his brilliant genius continually suggested. Yet he did this upon some occasions, which Amorassan considered as of too great importance to abandon without extreme pain; and as he was too keen sighted not to discover, that this opposition proceeded less from the Sultan himself than from the private insinuations of Ebu-Beker, he grieved to see his master subject to such unworthy influence, and his brow became clouded with vexation and discontent.

Discontent and vexation are but sorry recommendations to the favour of the great. The Sultan was surprized to find, that Amorassan was become a less pleasing companion, and Ebu-Beker's society gained by the comparison. The friendship between the sove-

reign and his minister had indeed now reached the highest point; it had not decreased, but it remained stationary; and this is a situation almost as dangerous in a monarch's favour as in a mistress's love, since both depend in a great degree upon that enthusiasm, which delights in the boundless, the excessive, and the undefined.

THE CALIPH.

Shall I tell you the truth, Ben Hafi? All this may be very just, and very wise; but I find it extremely tedious, and you would oblige me by being a little less sensible in future and rather more entertaining. I confess, I regret the pavillion and the Genius Gela-Eddin, and should be glad to hear something more about the Voice which came out of the cloud.

BEN HAFI.

Grant me your patience for a few moments, and your wish shall be obeyed.

Amorassan's ill-humour was further in-

creased, by discovering the worthlessness of several of those persons, to whom he had confided the execution of his plans, and whose talents and knowledge made their offence the more unpardonable. He found himself betrayed, deceived, disappointed, and disgusted: misanthropy began to steal insensibly into his bosom; and it was in this dangerous temper of mind, that an Egyptian was brought before him, many mysterious circumstances respecting whom had caused him to be suspected of sorcery.

The Egyptian easily read in the minister's eye an inclination to become better acquainted with his scientific secrets. They had many private conversations together; and no sooner did the necromancer hint at certain cabalistical words, whose power could give the speaker absolute authority over spirits of a higher sphere, than this thought darted like a flash of lightning through his hearer's brain:—"To become the lord of such a being is the only certain means of

enabling me to execute my great and glorious plans!"—

—"Yes!" said he to himself; "could I but once see clearly into the hearts of men, my designs would then be certain of success: I should then be armed against deception, might select none but fit instruments, and could reckon upon gathering securely the fruit of my benevolent labours. Yet hold! to be proof against the illusions of others, is not enough; I must also be guarded against those of my own heart. The being, whom I need, must not only warn me against the hypocrisy and artifices of my fellows, but against the deceitful enthusiasm of love, of friendship, and even of mistaken virtues. I must be enabled to read the human soul, to distinguish the semblance from the reality, to see before-hand the consequences of my own actions and those of others, and to remove from my senses all those deceitful clouds, with which sympathy, imagination, and the passions obscure the sight of men, and misguide their foot-steps."—

Inflamed with the most ardent love for all that was good and noble, the heart of Amorassan bounded with rapture, when he heard the assertion, that it lay in his own choice to realize this glorious vision. He became the Egyptian's scholar; the further that he advanced in the acquisition of the secret sciences, the more was he delighted with the beauty, the grandeur, and the utility of his views. His mysterious education was now completed; he was master of the important words, which enabled him to summon to his aid an immortal spirit. The Egyptian's labour was rewarded with life and liberty; he immediately departed from Ahmedabad, and Amorassan now lost no time in commencing his magical operations.

THE CALIPH.

I am heartily glad to hear it! Now then we shall meet again with the Voice out of the thick grey cloud. But I declare to you, Ben Hafi, that I can as yet see no reason, why the Genius Gela-Eddin should have

hed. It seems to me, that Amorassan's
n was a very discreet one; and I should
e to have just such a Spirit myself con-
ually at my elbow to give me a hint,
ien my courtiers speak truth, and when
ey are deceiving me.

Ten years ago had I possest such a warn-
g spirit, my brother would still have been
re!

CHAP. IV.

—"Charm his eye, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows; so depart!"—

Macbeth.

AMORASSAN'S whole frame trembled with impatience, while he pronounced the powerful charm. He stood in the midst of the most retired apartment of his palace: the doors and windows were all carefully closed; light was excluded, except what proceeded from a golden chafing-dish which stood before him, and in which at intervals he burned perfumes and various other ingredients of magic efficacy. The spell was complete; thrice had he pronounced it in the awful name of Solomon, the powerful and the wise; and now a thick grey cloud

ending into the room, hovered a while
the chafing-dish, and then spread itself
ugh the whole apartment.
radually it dispersed; and now Amoras-
beheld a female figure, the faultless per-
on of whose form and features suffi-
tly assured him, that she was no
estrial being. Her robes were of the
st white; and her veil, which was
wn backwards and fell to her very feet,
fastened upon her brow by a garland of
te roses; but the mildew had sullied
y leaf, and in every flower there lurked
nker. Her forehead was smooth and fair
olished ivory. Her eyes, darker than jet
bony, were large and bright; but their
re resembled the shining of chrystal,
ier than the sparkling of diamonds: no
emanated from their orbs to light up
countenance, and she always bent them
ight before her with a fixed and steady
e. Her eye-brows were formed in the
est and most regular curve. Her full
m betrayed not the gentle rise and fall

of respiration, much less did it seem to have been ever agitated by the tempest of the furious passions: the breath of life was not perceived to impart its warmth to her lips, as red and as cold as coral; much less had they ever burned with the fiery blast of desire! never had either joy or sorrow drawn a wrinkle round that lovely mouth; and her smooth and blooming cheeks were equally unconscious of the tears of pain and the smiles of pleasure. Every feature was modelled in the most exquisite and most harmonious proportions; never did the poet's dream present an image of such faultless beauty, as that which now stood before Amorassan: ideal perfection was here embodied: but yet the whole appeared so cold, so indifferent, so insensible, that though the first glance was that of admiration, the second was accompanied by a sensation of uneasiness and anxiety indescribably disagreeable and painful. In vain did Amorassan gaze upon those cœlestial features; in her whole face could he not discover the

slightest trace of character, not even the most distant shadow of expression, which could point out the way to the heart, or give a clue to the sentiments of its possessor.

With her hands folded upon her bosom, the Spirit stood fixed before Amorassan silent and motionless. Equally overpowered by her exalted nature, by her surprizing loveliness, by the dignity of her demeanour, and by the killing coldness of her look, he sought in vain in her countenance for something of that expression, which encourages us to address a person still unknown. At length he said, in a subdued voice, while he felt his respiration so opprest, that he could only pronounce his words with difficulty—"Answer! What art thou?"—

The Spirit.—She, whom you summoned, and whom you need; a Spirit from the islands of chillness and gloom. Does not my countenance tell you, that I am the right?

Amorassan.—I know not yet: I can only feel at present, that the sight of you congeals

the blood in my veins. You are beautiful as the light of day; yet deformity would be less painful to me, for that at least must possess some expression.

The Spirit.—That want of expression proves, that I am the very Spirit, whom you need. But if you like me not, being such as I am and must remain, dismiss me. To me it matters not where I am, whether here or else-where; whether I bask in the warm sun-beams, or bathe in the cold damp vapours of the islands of chillness and gloom; for to me the sun-beams are not warm, nor the damp vapours cold. I will serve you, if you command it; I will leave you, if you permit me, and either way shall be equally well pleased.

Amorassan.—Tell me, thou frosty being, know'st thou the word *virtue?*

The Spirit.—I have sometimes heard it mentioned, but it is no concern of mine.

Amorassan.—No? And *vice* then. . . . ?

The Spirit.—Oh! that I have heard mentioned much oftener: but that is no concern

of mine either. I used to hear much about such things, when I lived in the court of Solomon.

Amorassan.—Of Solomon the wise?

The Spirit.—Aye; the wise.... as he was called. I was his slave, and in his latter years his constant companion. It was in my society, that he learned, that every thing on earth is vanity.

Amorassan.—What? even what he had done for his own pleasure and advantage?

The Spirit.—Even that; and as soon as this last point was ascertained, he dismist me. Since that time, I have inhabited the islands of chillness and gloom, which exist in the frozen ocean.

Amorassan.—From so melancholy an abode, you must needs be pleased at your deliverance.

The Spirit.—Melancholy? What is melancholy? Pleased? Nothing pleases, or displeases me.

Amorassan.—Feelest thou neither liking, nor disliking? neither love, nor aversion?

The Spirit.—Of all this I know nothing; and therefore am I the very Spirit, whom you need.

Amorassan.—Then it is a matter of indifference to you, how I employ you; and you will execute evil as cheerfully as good, good with as little remorse as evil?

The Spirit.—Good? Evil? All this is your affair, not mine.

Amorassan.—Unfeeling Spirit! You grieve my very heart.

The Spirit.—May be so; but the grief of your heart is no concern of mine. Why at that declaration is your countenance so suddenly overcast? What strange things are mortals! Now that you have found in me the Spirit you desired, you recoil with horror at the fulfilment of your own wish. Ah! I see, that the sons of earth are not changed since Solomon's time.

Amorassan.—And what then is man in your opinion?

The Spirit.—He is not that, which he fain would be; and were he everything, which

he wishes to be to-day, he would wish to-morrow to be that again, which he was yesterday. Now then inform me in your turn, why am I summoned hither?

Amorassan.—I wish to make the people of Guzurat content and happy.

The Spirit.—And what then is thy station?

Amorassan.—I am Guzurat's Grand-Vizir, and its Sultan's favourite.

The Spirit.—Oh! wise and powerful Solomon! then at least one of thy sayings is false.

Amorassan.—And which is that?

The Spirit.—There is nothing new under the sun.—And how would'st thou have me help thee?

Amorassan.—Guard me against others.... still more against myself. Unmask the wilful hypocrisy of those who surround me, and dispel the involuntary illusions of my own enthusiastic heart.

The Spirit.—Thou shalt be obeyed. No sooner does my chilling breath fall upon

her, than Falshood perishes: there is no veil so thick, that my piercing eye cannot penetrate it. Neither the sweet voice of praise, be it flattering, or sincere; nor the mouth's enchanting smile, be it artificial, or natural; nor the look expressive of good-will, be it worn from real feeling, or assumed to serve a momentary purpose; nor the overflowings of the warm heart, whether they arise from a wish to deceive, or from the enthusiasm of the moment; none of these can mislead *me*. Nor am I more bewildered by the brilliant dreams of imagination, or tempted from my steady course by the melodious pleading of sentiment. Love and friendship wave their torches before me in vain: I gaze steadily on that which is wise and true, and their glare can neither dazzle my sight, nor their vapours obscure my object.

Amorassan, speak but the word, and nothing shall henceforth deceive you. You shall see men and things, as they really are; you shall see your own heart, as it really is, and as it will be.

Amorassan.—I speak that word, and from his moment date the commencement of ny bosom's peace. Now then I can execute ny glorious plans without fear of treachery, r of my own weakness. The happiness f Guzurat and of its monarch is secure, nd my friend may defy the malice of his emies!

The Spirit.—All this concerns not *me.*

Amorassan.—Insensible being, what then *loes* concern you? At least you must love ourself; and caring so little for the happiess of others, probably you care the more nxiously for your own.

The Spirit.—Happiness? My own? Myself? hese are all words quite unknown to me. lappiness?—I have heard it spoken of. But s for me..... I neither weep, nor smile; nd except smiling and weeping, I see nohing of consequence which men do on arth: whatever lies between these two, nly serves to conduct either to the one, or o the other.

Amorassan.—Talk not thou of what men

do. A being, so destitute of all feeling, is not fit to mix with human creatures!

The Spirit.—That is true, and therefore am I exactly fitted for the associate of a man like yourself; unless you have already forgotten the object, for which you called me hither.

Amorassan.—Leave me! I feel ill at ease in your society.

The Spirit.—In yours, I feel neither ill nor well. But now the bond between us is become indissoluble. I must henceforth be your constant attendant, and aid you to unravel the web, which destiny has woven for you. Your future fortunes are well known to me; but I am only permitted to lay the leaves open before you one by one. Had I been permitted to read the *last* leaf, then I should also have known, how long I have to remain your slave; but this contained my own destiny, and the volume was suddenly closed.

Amorassan.—And does this grieve you?

The Spirit.—Nothing grieves, or pleases me.

Amorassan.—Leave me!..... Yet stay! When I require your aid, by what name must I summon you?

The Spirit.—I am called—"the nameless-one;"—you will bestow on me a better name hereafter. But whenever my ministry is needful, I shall stand before you uncalled, and invisible to all eyes but yours. Of this be assured, for your master and mine has enjoined it.

Amorassan.—There is much more, which I would gladly ask; but my heart feels changed to ice by that chilling look. Retire, till my blood has regained sufficient warmth, and my heart sufficient feeling to support your presence. Leave me! Begone!

The thick grey cloud again spread itself through the apartment. It rose into the air, and when it dispersed, the Spirit was no longer visible.

THE CALIPH.

Now trust me, Ben Hafi, I am heartily

pleased with her departure: this freezing Spirit had produced just the same effect upon me, as upon Amorassan; and her wearisome insensibility has entirely cured me of the wish to have such a being at my elbow.

MUZAFFER.

Amiable, in truth, this Spirit is not; but still she must probably be of great utility in the service of a Grand-Vizir: at least, she will enable Amorassan to see through the veil of humility and disinterestedness, with which hypocrites so frequently conceal their private views with the most success and the least suspicion. Ben Hafi, the Sultan waits for the remainder of your tale.

(Ben Hafi marked well the malignant glance, with which this speech was accompanied, and the insinuation which it was designed to convey. But he answered not, and thus continued his discourse.)

CHAP. V.

—"Oh! how wretched
that poor man, who hangs on princes' favours!
here is between that smile we would aspire to,
hat sweet aspect of princes and our ruin,
ore hopes and fears, than war or women have."—
Henry the Eighth.

ome hours elapsed, before Amorassan re-
ered from the effect produced upon him
the Spirit's freezing demeanour. But
h the return of day, all his glorious vi-
s for the happiness of mankind resumed
r influence over his mind with renewed
our; and he rejoiced in the prospect of
ig now able to carry them into execu-
without fear of further disappointments.

The light of virtue irradiated his whole s
and envy, treachery, self-interest, and
pocrisy, alike Virtue's foes and Amoras
fled from its piercing beams, as ghosts
the splendour of the approaching sun-s

The governor of the frontier-provin
Burglana was deceased, and it was nece
to consult the Sultan respecting the dis
of this important place. Ibrahim had
well, was in high spirits, and receive
Vizir with a smile of such good-wi
touched him to the very heart. Th
had produced this effect was evident,
the consciousness of having afforded s
faction, increased the Sultan's. He wel
ed Amorassan in the most engaging
ner, and marked by his reception, tha
considered him as the companion o
youth, as the friend of his selection, as
favourite of his heart, and the partner o
most secret thoughts. With every mo
their discourse became more warm
more confidential; and as their interc
had rather languished for the last

months, this unexpected renewal of affection was doubly grateful to the sympathizing heart of Amorassan.

That heart now lay expanded before the Sultan's eyes; the Vizir laid open his distant glorious plans for the prosperity of Guzurat; his eyes floated in dews of rapture, while he dwelt upon them, and the spirit of inspiration seemed to flutter round his lips.

Ibrahim entered into all his feelings, approved of all his plans, echoed back all his wishes. Amorassan's soul overflowed with gratitude, and his satisfaction seemed to be complete, when his sovereign, taking his hand, and fixing his eyes on his face with a smile of benevolence, informed him, "that *he* too had a plan to propose, and a wish to be complied with." Already did the assurance of his ready and unconstrained consent float upon the lips of the delighted Amorassan; when suddenly in the further part of the saloon he perceived the Spirit, with all her calmness, coldness, and oppres-

sive gravity. Her right hand pointed to the Sultan with a warning gesture; the fore-finger of the left was placed against her lip, as if enjoining silence.

The colour instantly fled from Amorassan's cheeks; he gazed steadfastly upon the vision; the fire of enthusiasm was extinguished in his eyes, and the assurance, which he had already unclosed his lips to give, dissolved into unintelligible murmurs.

Ibrahîm drew his hand away; he gazed upon his Vizir in astonishment; and the cold constraint of Amorassan's manner produced a corresponding change in his own. After a pause, he said with an embarrassed air—"Perhaps, you already guess, what I am going to propose. Perhaps, you are unwilling to comply with my wish in this respect."—

Amorassan.—I have not the most distant suspicion of your plan. Nor can I feel unwilling to comply with any wish of yours; of yours, whose wishes are commands.

Ibrahim.—Ah! when I mentioned to you, that I had a wish, it was not the master who spoke to his servant, but Ibrahim to Amorassan! true, I command, when I address my Vizir; but when I converse with my friend, I can but wish, and am only happy in the completion of my wish, if it meet with my friend's approbation.

Amorassan.—Then name your wish! Surely, you need not now be assured, that Amorassan would think your satisfaction cheaply bought by the sacrifice of his existence!

Ibrahim.—Some other time, when you are again in the same disposition.... when your manner is the same.... when your heart is as harmoniously attuned to mine, as it was this morning when you first addrest me. 'Tis very strange! What could occasion in you so sudden an alteration? Nay, own the truth, Amorassan: you certainly must have *guessed*, what it was that I intended to propose to you.

Amorassan.—I did not.

Ibrahim.—So dry? So brief?

Amorassan.—To convince you of a truth, hitherto a single word of mine has been thought by you sufficient.

Ibrahim.—Well then! there let the business rest. Perhaps, the unaccountable hesitation in your manner, which communicated itself to mine, and made me in my turn hesitate, was a secret warning to weigh the matter more carefully, before I submitted it to your inspection. I will follow the advice, and now let us call another subject."—

The conversation then turned entirely upon topics of indifference. Amorassan vainly endeavoured to recover his former ease; he was absent, embarrassed, and the discourse languished. At length Ibrahim relieved both his Vizir and himself by suffering him to depart, and Amorassan hastened homeward. No sooner was he alone in his palace, than the Spirit presented herself before him.

The Spirit.—You see, that I am faithful to my promise: I have not waited for your summoning me.

Amorassan.—Answer without delay; what meant your unexpected appearance even now at the seraglio?

The Spirit.—I appeared to fulfil your injunctions, and warn you against yourself. Fascinated by the delightful feelings of gratitude and friendship, intoxicated by your sovereign's flattering praise, and overpowered by the condescending marks of his affection, you were on the point of promising to comply with his wishes, without giving yourself time to learn, whether they were wishes with which it would be right or prudent to comply. I appeared to prevent your contracting this rash engagement, and at my presence your fond illusion fled.

Amorassan.—And even had I formed that engagement, would he have held me to it, if it proved to be either imprudent or wrong? No; Ibrahim himself would not then have wished the engagement to be kept. What he had asked, and I had granted, in the warmth of affection.....

The Spirit.—Affection? Affection for *you?*

The Sultan's kindness this morning took its rise from quite another source.

Amorassan.—Is then the Sultan my friend no longer?

The Spirit.—It is evident, that he is still your friend, since he endeavoured to *entice* you artfully into doing that, which otherwise he would have *commanded.* In truth, the wish to ensnare a person into doing any thing, is no proof of an honest or manly heart; but it proves at least, that the Sultan esteems the friend, loves the favourite, and wishes to preserve the Grand-Vizir.

Amorassan.—And what then was it, that the Sultan was about to propose?

The Spirit.—He ardently desired to entice you into consenting, that the place of Chief-Cadi should be given to a certain Ebu-Beker, whose father formerly possest it.

Amorassan.—And your appearance prevented me from giving this so much-wished consent? Fatal being! you have deprived me of one of the happiest moments of my existence.

The Spirit.—Nothing is more probable; but that is no concern of mine! I have done my duty, and only done it, because it *was* my duty: if you found pain in it, I found no pleasure, for pleasure and pain are alike to me.

Amorassan.—Oh! had you not appeared .... had I but followed the emotions of my heart! This Ebu-Beker is my mortal enemy; I know well the plans, which he has laid for my destruction; I would have made every thing known to the Sultan. I would have shown him, how deadly the man hates me; I would have pointed out to him the personal dangers, to which his elevation would expose me; and then I would have fallen at the feet of my friend, and told him—" and all these considerations do I sacrifice to your wish! Let Ebu-Beker occupy the wished-for place; not that station alone, but my own would I surrender to him with good will, could it afford my sovereign the slightest gratification. Let Ebu-Beker still be my enemy;

Amorassan shall henceforth be his friend, since Ibrahim values him!"—But now, instead of this, when the Sultan's heart was open.... when his kindness was so warm .... to repulse him by my chilling air.... to make him so naturally believe, that I guessed his wish, and prepared myself to counteract it.... away from my presence, thou cold insensible Spirit! I hate thee!

The Spirit.—Indeed? Already? But as you please! I expect no other reward from *men.* And have you then forgotten the secret character of this Ebu-Beker, to whom you are so ready to resign your station, and with it the care of the happiness of Guzurat? Is he not avaricious, luxurious, envious, cruel, and malignant? Are not his principles, his views, his plans of government, exactly the reverse of yours? You would have told the Sultan, that he is your mortal enemy? Think you, that this is not already known to the Sultan? Were he ignorant that Ebu-Beker hates and has injured you, and that you have reason to hate Ebu-Beker,

ɔuld he have endeavoured by an artifice ensnare you into consenting to his ele-tion?—However in what regards the signation of your own station to him, specting that step you need be in no ɪste: let him only obtain the place of hief Cadi, which is now his object, and ıat of Grand Vizir will soon follow it.

Amorassan.—Of Grand Vizir? Ebu-Be-ɛr Grand Vizir?

The Spirit.—Infallibly—unless indeed you lopt the courtier's policy, and destroy your val before he has time to destroy *you.*

Amorassan.—Is it even so? nay, then the ıltan's affections must be totally withdrawn ɔm me, and from this moment I have no-ing more left to care for. I never made ıt two requests to Allah: the first, to retain ɹahim's friendship; the second, to make m happy through his people, and his peo-e happy through *him.* The loss of my ɔwer could only grieve me, if Guzurat and ɜ monarch should lose under my successor ıose advantages which they have acquired

under me, and those which I hoped they would acquire still further—but the loss of Ibrahim's friendship.....

The Spirit.—Said I, that you have lost it? No; you possess it still; will still possess it.. ..even when he bestows your station on your rival. The Sultan himself will lament the necessity, which occasions your fall: he will shed more tears at parting, than yourself, and those tears will be sincere: he will regret your absence, will miss your society with every hour of the day.....

Amorassan.—And yet will part with me?

The Spirit.—And yet will part with you ....for Ebu-Beker will have it so.

Amorassan.—Ebu-Beker? can the cold-hearted, malignant, unfeeling Ebu-Beker, he who is unable to sympathize with one of the generous Ibrahim's emotions, can *he* possess such influence over the Sultan's heart....

The Spirit.—Of the Sultan's heart he possesses no share, and never will possess any: but he is the master of that which often has

more influence over a sovereign than the heart, and by which the heart itself is frequently misled.—Ebu-Beker is master of the key to Ibrahim's imagination: he is skilful in the art of showing the Sultan *to* the Sultan in a light, in which he appears to be much greater, much wiser, much more brilliant and majestic than he either *is*, or *will*, or *can* be. Such a man is not esteemed by a sovereign; but before the thing is even suspected, his presence becomes indispensable—Ebu-Beker is determined upon your ruin: the Sultan will resist awhile, but friendship will at length yield to necessity. *You* will still be Ibrahim's secret friend, but Ebu-Beker will be the Sultan's Grand Vizir.

Now then make your choice! either while it is still in your power, you must ruin this Ebu-Beker, *your* enemy, and the enemy of those views which you term so great and benevolent; or else you must consent to his elevation and leave the Sultan to proceed further as caprice or accident may direct.—I leave you to determine."—

The Spirit disappeared—Dreadful was the contest, which now arose in the bosom of Amorassan.—Should he represent to Ibrahim the dangerous character of Ebu-Beker? were he to do so, would his representation be believed, coming from the lips of a man whom the Sultan knew to be his enemy? Was not the Sultan already secretly determined to make him Chief Cadi?—Should he wait in silence for the Sultan's orders? or should he surprize the Sultan agreeably by proposing, as from himself, that Ebu-Beker might be raised to the desired dignity; and thus should he strengthen his own interest with Ibrahim by affording him an unexpected gratification, at the same time that he bound his rival in chains of gratitude, which might possibly with-hold him from endeavouring further to poison his master's mind against him?

He dwelt for a few moments on this last idea with satisfaction. His understanding told him, that it was the most prudent and craftily-imagined; but his heart soon rejected it with contempt, and shame coloured his

cheeks at having suffered it to pollute his mind for an instant.

—" What!" cried he, starting from the sopha, " would I then purchase the continuance of the Sultan's favour at the price of the happiness of his kingdom? shall the administration of the laws in Guzurat depend upon the justice of an Ebu-Beker? Shall I to-day make the first step by a side-path towards the degradation of my character, in order that when I fall, I may feel that I have deserved my fall by deserting that straight path, which I have so long trodden with steps so firm and with courage so undaunted!—never! never! I swear it by the Prophet's tomb!"—

As Amorassan pronounced these words, a soft ray of light fell upon the picture of his actions in the pavillion of mortal excellence. The spirits remarked it with joy, and their prayers of gratitude mounted to the throne of Allah.

THE CALIPH.

Truly, Ben Hafi, this Amorassan of yours seems to be in such a ticklish situation for a Grand Vizir, that were I in his place, I should be extremely puzzled what to do. But of one thing I am certain; such a man as Amorassan is the very sort of minister that I should like, and it is well for Muzaffer, that hitherto I have sought for such a man in vain.

MUZAFFER.

And what then could this Amorassan have done for your service, Commander of the Faithful, which Muzaffer has neglected? do I not labour day and night to make the monarch's privileges and the people's prosperity go hand in hand?

THE CALIPH.

Why, Muzaffer! hast thou really undertaken a task so difficult? Now may Allah support you in it, poor Muzaffer! for truly it

eems to me very like making the tiger and he lamb draw in the same yoke.

MUZAFFER.

Are not your rights enforced? Are not he laws exercised most strictly? Is not im-licit obedience to your will inculcated with ncessant care? By wholesome severity I ıave produced among your subjects such a ense of duty, that only command them to pring from a precipice, and you will see hem rush towards it. [Here the Caliph's ıeart swelled with the pride of power, and ıe rewarded his Vizir with a smile of ap-ırobation. Muzaffer continued:] Or say, hat they should hesitate; there is a sure neans of subduing their obstinacy. It is ıut making parchment of the skins of a do-:en ring-leaders, and covering your drums vith it: I will stake my head, that their com-ades will follow to the music of those drums vithout so much as uttering a whisper.

THE CALIPH.

May Allah forgive me that smile, which polluted my lips even now! By the light of Heaven I swear, Vizir, if I thought that such music had ever been heard in Guzurat, I would myself order *one* skin to be made into parchment, that I might stamp on it in golden characters the rights of human nature; that skin should be your own, Vizir!

MUZAFFER.

Mighty Lord, whence this anger?—I spoke but figuratively.

THE CALIPH.

I hope so; but Allah sees the heart.

BEN HAFI.

To know in how far that speech was figurative, the Caliph should ask his subjects. Nay, Vizir, frown if thou wilt, and strike me dead with a look if thou canst; still will I assert, and loudly, there is no station on earth more dreadful than a sovereign's throne, whose

teps are wet with tears, and whose curtains re shaken by the sighs and groans of his ubjects.

THE CALIPH.

I hear not those sighs and groans on mine, Ben Hafi; oh! believe me, I *deserve* not to ear them. I swear, if I heard them once, hat moment would I break in pieces my olden throne, and make myself a coffin from he fragments."—

As he pronounced this solemn declaration, he benevolent monarch's eyes overflowed ith tears, and he felt his hand prest to the ps of Ben Hafi, who had thrown himself on is knees before him—he bade him rise in a one of affection, and the Hebrew resumed is narrative.

CHAP. VI.

—"Quel guardo suo a dentro spia
Nel piu secreto lor gli affetti umani."—

TASSO.

BEN HAFI.

AMORASSAN'S reflections were interrupted by a summons to attend his father, who had been long unwell, and whose dissolution was thought to be at hand. He found him extended on his couch; near him sat his younger son Zemaun, his countenance overcast, and leaning his head on his hand. On Amorassan's entrance, the old Moawyah raised himself with difficulty, grasped his hand, and thus addrest him.

Moawyah.—I sent for you, my beloved son, that I might bestow on you my blessing before we part for ever; I wished also to

mention one last request; it is the only one which your father will now make to you on this side the grave.

[Amorassan was deeply affected: his eyes overflowed; he bowed down his head, and sealed a pious kiss upon the hand of his father. The old man understood the answer of the heart: he gazed upon his son with kindness for a few moments, and then resumed his discourse.]

—"I have ever found in you a dutiful son, and an affectionate friend; and such you remained in a station, in which those names are remembered so rarely! to-day I remind you for the first time (though I know well that you never will forget it) that services rendered by me to the deceased Sultan were the sole means of bringing you into an intimate connection with his son, and of making you what you are; the first in all Guzurat for power and happiness. Seeing you such, I should have nothing more to wish, had I not another son, whose claims to a brilliant station in life are no less urgent

upon me now, than your own were formerly. I blame you not for having hitherto delayed to exert your power in his behalf, or in that of any one of the numerous relations of our family: yet I cannot but think it strange, that our house should be the only one of distinction in all Amedabad, which deserves your favour, and which has not obtained a single mark of it.

Amorassan.—My father!....

Moawyah.—Look, my Amorassan, look upon your brother Zemaun! a man of courage, sense, and active enterprize! he has already shown the foes of Guzurat in battle, that he is worthy of the race from whence he springs, and the vacant government of Burglana is well suited both to his abilities and his claims. All that I request, is this, no more; obtain for Zemaun this dignified office, and prove that Amorassan is not more a dutiful son, than he is an affectionate brother."—

—"Amorassan," said Zemaun, while he rose, and advancing towards him, clasped

his hand; "It is against my will, that our father presses this point upon you. I confess, too, that every one of my own age, and equal claims, whom I saw you raise to dignity and power, made my pride feel humiliated; the thought, that you must needs entertain a very mean opinion of my talents and character, embittered my heart towards you, and for some time past has made me shun your society. But at the death-bed of our father, let all these little animosities be forgotten! Willingly would I wait, till the length and number of my services should force from the Caliph and yourself an acknowledgment, that they merited a reward: but since my father wishes to see me established before his eyes close for ever, I am ready to receive this benefit at your hands, and owe it entirely to fraternal affection, rather than to any merit of my own."—

Moawyah.—Spoken, as a brother *should* speak!—Now then, what answers my Amorassan?

Amorassan.—You see me, my father, deep-

ly afflicted by what has just now past. Was it not your own injunction, that I should not give envy cause to say, that I laboured to secure my power by filling every place with my own relations? Did you not charge me to employ, not such as I loved dearest, but such as I esteemed most! Remember, that I am not Guzurat's Vizir for my own sake, but for the people's—I can act boldly, while the loss of the Sultan's favour involves no sacrifice but myself: I can now present my neck to the bow-string without fear in the cause of virtue; but oh! how much shall I tremble to risk my life, when the loss of mine may draw after it the destruction of those, who are connected with me by the bonds of affection and of blood! I feel, that my virtue is too weak to support so severe a trial.

Moawyah.—It is for your brother.... for your only brother, that I plead! Show him some favour, and set your other relations aside.

Amorassan.—It is only by adducing of my

brother as an example, that I have been able to resist the importunities of all the rest.

Moawyah.—By which conduct you are become the object of their united hatred....

Amorassan.—Which I lament, but which I must endure.

Zemaun.—And will still endure it, even though it should be increased by that of your brother?

Amorassan.—I think too well of my brother to suspect that....

Moawyah.—And by your father's displeasure?—You are silent?—Enough! I would gladly have owed this obligation to you. Since *you* reject my request, I will apply to the Sultan: am I to expect your opposition?—

Amorassan.—I shall perform my duty, but no more.

Moawyah.—And who then, will you tell the Sultan, is the fittest person to be governor of Burglana?

Amorassan.—Khaled; he to whom Guzu-

rat has been already twice indebted for her preservation! him must I recommend: to decide belongs to the Sultan.

Moawyah.—Now then it is indeed time for me to die!—I have brought into the world a cold-hearted statesman, who is only anxious for the security of his own greatness; but I possess no son in him! he, who affects to have an ear ever open to the prayers of all who suffer, is deaf to the entreaty of his expiring parent! He, who can sympathize with the calamities of the meanest beggar, looks with firmness and indifference on the wound, which he inflicts on his own father's heart. Before my eyes, which perhaps behold him for the last time, he scorns and rejects the services of my brave son; of his own excellent brother; of a man whose talents would shine out as brilliant as his own, were they not kept purposely in obscurity by his envy and unnatural hatred! —Leave me! leave me!—I possess no son in thee!—

Amorassan.—Oh! my father, how totally

do you mistake my heart! But I have done; be it, as you wish! [at this moment he perceived the Spirit standing beside him, who warned him not to proceed; but Amorassan heeded not the warning, and continued as follows]—I know well, that I ought not to yield; my reason remains unconvinced, but my heart cannot support the bitterness of your reproaches; to-morrow I will demand the government of Burglana for my brother: if evil arises from this appointment, Allah grant that it may all fall upon my own head; and if my compliance gives you, my father, one moment of satisfaction, I shall bear that evil without a murmur, however heavy its weight may be."—

The old man repaid this promise with a profusion of blessings; but while his lips overflowed with gratitude, his heart was conscious of nothing more than exultation at having carried his point. Zemaun addrest all his thanks to his father, explicitly declaring, that he considered himself as indebted to him alone for the promise, which

he had with so much labour extorted from the unwilling Amorassan. The latter was now dismissed affectionately by Moawyah, and he hastened to collect his scattered thoughts in the most secluded chamber of his palace.

He threw open the door hastily, and the first object which met his eyes was the warning Spirit. He started back, and turned away his head in disgust.

Amorassan.—And must I then meet that freezing aspect at every turning? Answer me, thou sullen thing! what meant thy presence at my father's?

The Spirit.—You were on the point of committing an absurdity; I appeared to warn you against the illusion of your heart; but you heeded me not.

Amorassan.—An absurdity? was it one to comply with the last request of an expiring father?

The Spirit.—Your father is not expiring; his illness was dissembled, that his entreaties might have the greater effect. The artifice

has succeeded; you have been weak enough to give a promise, whose fulfilment will shake the whole happiness of this kingdom to its very foundations: yet to break it will subject your own heart to the most exquisite of human sufferings! Know, that your father's request was dictated by Ebu-Beker, who is engaged in a secret conspiracy with your brother, the object of which is your destruction. And have you then forgotten the nature and principles of the man, to whose government you have promised to commit this important province? Are you not aware, that even in childhood Zemaun's character has displayed nothing but an assemblage of the most hateful passions? His darling vice was originally ambition, boundless and insatiable; and heedless of the means by which its gratification was procured, as long as he counted upon your assistance, he only envied you: disappointed in that expectation, he now bears towards you aversion the most inveterate and deadly. To gratify his ambition is become a secondary object:

his first is, to be revenged on you and on the Sultan, by whom his services (as he thinks) have been neglected. Vengeance is his daily contemplation, his nightly dream: now then make him governor of Burglana, and he will seize the first opportunity of forming an alliance with the Sultan of Candeish, Guzurat's most dangerous enemy; he will deliver to him this important frontier-province, and will thereby afford a free passage for his troops into the defenceless country. The land will be deluged with blood, the air will resound with groans and curses; the Sultan's throne will totter to its base; and *you* will be the author of all these miseries to Guzurat; *you*, who wilfully committed Burglana to such a brother; *you*, who will also be suspected of participation in your brother's plots and treasons. Now then, if you dare, perform your promise.

Amorassan.—Monster! and if I break it, with it I break my father's heart. The weight of years already presses him down to the grave, and shall I add to that weight the

bitterness of disappointment? His whole soul seems bent upon the fulfillment of my promise; his life hangs but by a thread; vexation at this breach of faith may snap it! Leave me! Leave me! Oh! that I had never seen thee.

The Spirit.—I confess, that were it not for my warning, you would enjoy to-morrow an hour, such as few taste out of Paradise. The accomplishment of his hopes would supply the almost exhausted lamp of your father's life for years: when you brought him the wished-for tidings of success, he would bless you with a faltering voice, and with eyes overflowing with tears of gratitude and joy: your brother would clasp you to his bosom with well-dissembled affection; the Sultan would load you with flattery, and express his warm approbation of your choice; and thus would you dream away time, intoxicated with the sweet illusion, till the tempest should break loose, and the dæmons of vengeance and

war cover with misery Guzurat's now happy plains.

Amorassan.—It must be done! wretch that I am! I *must* then break the heart of my kind, my venerable father.

The Spirit.—That is no concern of mine.—

Amorassan.—Fiend! thou hast nothing of humanity about thee, but the outward form! could thy marble heart feel but one touch of pity....

The Spirit.—Pity?—now you speak nonsense, and I leave you—but first know, that Ebu-Beker has prepared the Sultan to hear you demand the government of Burglana for your brother: in return for which he means to ask your consent, that Ebu-Beker should fill the place of Chief-Cadi.—Now then decide, as you like best; *how* you decide, I care not."—And the Spirit vanished.

THE CALIPH.

Methinks, Ben Hafi, this Amorassan of yours does not rightly know, what he would have. This disagreeable Spirit (though I must confess, that she is no great favourite of mine, and think the universe should not induce me to have her so continually at my elbow) acts exactly as he desired her; and yet the better that she obeys him, the more is he out of humour with her. I really think, that he is by no means entitled to use such angry language to her, and call her by such harsh names. Not but Amorassan stands high in my favour: for a Vizir he seems to be a very good kind of man; only I am heartily sorry on his account, that he ever took it into his head to be a Vizir at all.—But proceed; I am curious to know how he decided.

MUZAFFER.

I can guess; his place depends on his

opposing Ebu-Beker's views, and Ebu-Beker favoured Zemaun's pretensions: Amorassan therefore will counteract them.

BEN HAFI.

Your guess is right; only instead of Amorassan's motive, you have named your own.—I proceed with my narrative.

CHAP. VII.

Now withered murder thus with stealthy pace,
And Tarquin's ravishing strides, tow'rds his design
Moves like a ghost."—

MACBETH.

Ebu-Beker had succeeded in persuading the Sultan, that Amorassan took to himself all the credit of the good which was done throughout Guzurat, and that the people only looked upon the monarch as an insignificant tool in the hands of his Vizir. The consequence of these impressions was, that Ibrahim received his once-loved friend with the most studied indifference. He affected not to perceive his entrance: he continued to play with a favourite ape; he took care, in conversing with his eunuchs,

to let fall sarcastic observations, whose concealed object was to wound the feelings of Amorassan. At length when he had discharged one of these poisoned arrows so dexterously, that he thought it could not fail of hitting the mark, he cast his eyes upon his Vizir to enjoy the sight of his vexation. Then did Amorassan answer his look with one so expressive of good-will, so free from reproach, so mild, so humble, and yet so open, so dignified, and so firm, that it pierced the Sultan to the very heart. His dormant affection was rouzed, and his faltering voice betrayed the emotions of his bosom, while he inquired—"And what then brings my friend Amorassan hither?"—

The well-known tone of affection touched the finest strings of Amorassan's heart: the memory of their long and early friendship filled his eyes with tears. He saw, that his evident emotion had communicated itself to Ibrahim; he resolved to seize the fortunate moment, and come to a full explanation respecting Ebu-Beker, and his projects.

Suddenly the recollection struck him, that the Spirit had apprized him of the Sultan's design to ask that morning the place of Chief Cadi for Ebu-Beker, and he suspected, that this show of friendship was assumed to win his consent with the less difficulty. Immediately, his enthusiasm died away, and he replied coldly and gravely—"that he came to recommend a fit person to fill the government of Burglana."—

Ibrahim eyed him for some moments in astonishment: he had marked the sudden glow upon Amorassan's cheek; he saw, that tears of affection had gushed into his eyes: and now how came it that all was gone so suddenly? After a pause, he recovered himself, and inquired with equal coldness—"whom Amorassan's judgment favoured?"—

He already anticipated the answer, and was prepared to grant the government to Zemaun, requesting in return Ebu-Beker's nomination to the place of Chief Cadi; for thus had it been secretly arranged between the Sultan and his

favourite. What then was his surprize to hear the name of Khaled!

Against this hero no objection could be raised. Mortified, confused, disappointed, Ibrahim stammered out a faint approbation; and with a bleeding heart the Vizir regained his home, convinced that he no longer possest the Sultan's confidence, dreading the reproaches of his incensed father, trembling for the welfare of Guzurat, and destitute of all consolation, except the consciousness of having done his duty.

MUZAFFER.

And what he could to preserve his place.

THE CALIPH.

It's a great pity, Muzaffer, that you never can feel otherwise than like a Grand-Vizir! Yet that is not your fault, and we must take men as they are. And what, Ben Hafi, did this unfortunate Amorassan do next? for that he is, and always will be, unfor-

tunate with that freezing Spirit of his, I have no longer any sort of doubt. Not that I think the Spirit to blame either; she only does her duty; but then to be sure she never has any thing to say, but what is extremely disagreeable.

BEN HAFI.

After this last interview with Ibrahim, Amorassan began to feel that his own friendship was shaken: he doubted whether this dissembling Sultân, this man in secret alliance with his enemy, this luke-warm friend who had withdrawn his confidence without the slightest ground of reason, merited that he should devote his life so entirely to his service. He forgot, that this want of confidence was mutual; that he was himself in secret alliance with a being, of whose virtues he was less persuaded than the Sultan was of Ebu-Beker's; and that when the heart of his friend was warm and open to him, his repulsive coldness had compelled him again to close it.

Absorbed in melancholy reflections, did Amorassan with the break of morning ascend a mountain at no great distance from his country-palace. A profusion of cedars, cypresses, and lemon-trees adorned it even to its loftiest summit. At its foot stood a pagoda of great antiquity and of extensive fame, venerable and magnificent. Here lived the light gazelles in tranquil security; many a sweet rivulet sparkling among the cliffs supplied their drink, and they satisfied their hunger with aromatic herbs: nor had the hunter's step ever been known to frighten into silence the brilliant-feathered choristers of these protected groves.

The air was freshening. A cool and pleasant gale played round the thoughtful brows of the Vizir, and bore to him on their soft wings the fragrance of the flowery vales below. The dwellings of men, (as yet silent and tranquil as the grave,) the blooming meadows and gardens, the mighty rivers, and the gently-flowing brooks, all glowed and glittered, and melted together in a stream of ro-

seate light, which was poured full upon them by the glory of the now-rising sun.

A deep silence prevailed above, below, around him: till the songs of birds seemed to bid creation awake, and awake to happiness. Amorassan felt, that at least in Guzurat that happiness was bestowed by *him:* he felt, that it was the consciousness of his unwearied watchfulness for their good, which enabled these still-slumbering men to slumber on in such security: he fancied, that he could hear the mother teach her infant to lisp his name with a blessing, and the old man (recounting to his grandchildren the sufferings of his youth) congratulate them, that under the government of Amorassan they had no such sufferings to apprehend.

In this moment he felt, that it was only by preserving his connection with its monarch, that he could preserve the power of conferring happiness on the kingdom: and he now resolved more firmly than ever to persevere in his benevolent designs; he

resolved never to abandon the weak and ungrateful Ibrahim to the mercy of his flatterers; and even (if it were necessary) to sacrifice his life, rather than desert the cause of those millions, whose welfare depended on his resolution.

—" Yes!" he exclaimed in virtuous rapture; " the sight of this general content rewards me for all my labours; and if I must fall a sacrifice for their sake, the blessings of thousands will surely follow me to the scaffold!"—

Scarcely were the words uttered, when the oppressive chillness which seized his heart announced, that the Spirit was near him.

THE CALIPH.

Ah! holy prophet, how it grieves me, that she should come just at such a time; for I am certain beforehand, that she comes to say something disagreeable! I should like so much myself to stand on the top of a mountain, overlook my kingdom, and feel

exactly, as Amorassan felt! Mark me, Muzaffer, I had rather hear you say of yourself, that which Amorassan said, than hear myself saluted sole monarch of the universe; always supposing, that you could say it with as much truth as Amorassan, which (I am sorely afraid) would not be exactly the case. Now proceed, Ben Hafi.

BEN HAFI.

—"Unwearied persecutor!" exclaimed Amorassan, "what brings thee hither just at this moment? It is the first happy one which I have known, since I entered into alliance with thee.

The Spirit.—Then must it needs be also the weakest and the wildest, and the one in which you delude yourself the most completely: for it is only by delusions, that man can make his moments happy.

Amorassan.—Then leave me my delusion!

The Spirit.—For what then was I summoned from my gloomy islands? Was it not

to *dispel* thy delusions? Thy petition comes too late, and I must do my duty.

Amorassan.—Oh! I was so happy....! the balmy air.... the beauty of the rising sun....

The Spirit.—Short-sighted mortal! Thou know'st not, that the breeze which plays round your brows so voluptuously, and cools so kindly the fever of your blood, at this moment loosens in the north a mountain of snow, which overwhelms whole villages: thou dost not think that the sun, in whose warmth you bask and whose glories you admire, sucks up even now, from fens and marshes, pestiferous vapours to spread disease from province to province, and collects from the aromatic exhalations which flatter your sense so agreeably, the elements of lightning, whose shafts shall pass over the villain's head harmless, while they strike the virtuous man to the ground.

Amorassan.—And what serves all this to prove? That great benefits are sometimes

attended by inferior evils: nothing more. I pretend not to counteract the established order of Nature: but all that man can do, have I, even I.....

The Spirit.—Yes! yes! I heard the boast of your fond enthusiasm! You spoke of Guzurat's happiness; of her happiness through *you!* Vain man! look on yon solitary cottage, which the tamarind-tree overshadows: there expires the virtuous father of a virtuous family, expires of a broken heart, and his last moments are embittered by the cries of his starving orphans.

THE CALIPH.

Allah be their comfort, and guide them to *me*, that I may cloath and nourish them!

BEN HAFI.

—"The author of all this misery," continued the Spirit, "the man, who out of spite and vengeance has brought this whole family from opulence to want; who has broken the father's heart, and has turned

out the children to beg their bread through the world; this very man is one of those judges, whose hand has been armed with authority by *you!*

Amorassan.—Name him! name him! and immediate punishment.....

The Spirit.—And what would it avail to point out one, when thousands are equally guilty? Mortal, I tell thee, could thine ear receive at once all the groans which are uttered by the unfortunate, the persecuted, the opprest in this Guzurat, which your fond illusion believes so happy; could I suddenly place before thine eyes in their whole gigantic deformity all the cruelty and injustice, which is committed in this kingdom in *your* name, the consciousness of your innocence would vanish like a dream, your heart would burst in pieces, and horror and despair would terminate your existence at once, without allowing time for the gush of a tear, or the utterance of a groan. Oh! what sovereign could endure the sight of that accumulated guilt

and misery, which afflicts his kingdom, without his brain being turned with horror!

THE CALIPH.

For pity's sake, Ben Hafi, stop the mouth of that terrible Spirit! While I listen to her, my blood runs cold, and I feel my heart pressed together. Allah knows, that for my own part, I have always meant to do that which was right; if I have erred, the fault is theirs, who deceived me. At the last dreadful day will I advance boldly to the judgment throne with my Vizir and my ministers, and say—"To do justice to all was my only wish on earth; but I was a man, and compelled to employ men as my instruments: my agents may have sinned, but my heart is innocent."—

The Caliph's eyes were raised to heaven, and his hands were folded upon his breast: the little deaf Megnoun believed, that his master was at his devotions, and he sank upon his knees, and murmured a prayer softly. The Caliph raised him with a smile

of benevolence, and resting his head upon his hand—" At that day," said he, "*thou* shalt stand nearest to me, and testify for my heart."—He paused for a moment; his countenance became dejected, and he added in a low voice—" There is but one accuser, whom I shall fear on that last day; and that one.... that one is my own brother."—

Ben Hafi fixed his eyes for a moment upon the Caliph's face with a look of the deepest emotion: he then looked down, and a tear trickled on his silver beard. His voice faltered, while he thus resumed his narrative.

—" The Spirit continued."—

THE CALIPH.

I am very sorry for it! I wish she would hold her tongue.

BEN HAFI.

Amorassan wished it too, and her voice vibrated to his inmost heart, while she proceeded as follows.—

—" Cast thine eyes on the smiling river, which winds among the flowers of yonder

meadow, and whose waters sparkle in the sun-shine: those waters bear with them into the ocean the corse of a blooming boy, whose nearest relations have secretly murdered him for the sake of his rich inheritance. Ask me not the murderer's name! even should I tell it, darkness covers the crime; the accuser would not be believed; the instruments are paid; and he who paid them, sits among those, into whose hands you have committed the superintendance of the orphans of the land.

See! see! where yonder hag creeps cautiously among the bushes below, and collects various flowers in her basket. She tramples under foot without regard the wholesome and medicinal herbs, and only gathers those blossoms, which conceal poison in their variegated cups. She needs them for a future crime, whose price is already paid, and whose commission you would vainly labour to prevent.

And hark! 'twas the trampling of a courser's hoofs. The victim approaches, and the

assassin has already taken his secret stand! the bow-string sounds; the poisoned arrow whistles through the air! It transfixes the innocent bosom; he falls, and malignant joy triumphs in the heart of his murderer. He struggles! he dies! Hark, Amorassan! hark! 'twas a hero's dying groan; 'twas the dying groan of *Khaled!*"—

Amorassan uttered a cry of horror and surprize; the blood rushed violently back from his heart, and he sank on the ground deprived of animation.

Commander of the Faithful, if you have any wish to see this Amorassan tried by adversity, the moment is near at hand.

THE CALIPH.

Nay, Ben Hafi, make him not unhappy for *my* sake. You know well, that I feel even for those, who deserve their misfortunes: how much more then must I pity a man like your Amorassan, especially since he has

the misfortune to have such a disagreeable Spirit continually at his elbow.

MUZAFFER.

And yet permit me to observe, that this Spirit speaks very sensibly: she paints the natural depravity of mankind in very true colours; and thereby she makes known the necessity which there exists for treating them with severity, and the folly of hoping to correct their vices by mild means; which, as your Highness may remember, was always my opinion when.....

THE CALIPH.

I remember it well, Muzaffer, and I heartily wish, that *you* could forget it—say no more about it, but let Ben Hafi proceed.

CHAP. VIII.

—" Caitiff, shake to pieces,
Who under covert of convenient seeming
Hast practised on man's life—*I* am a man
More sinned against, than sinning,"—

KING LEAR.

When, on the return of his senses, Amorassan hastened back to the metropolis, he heard in every whisper of the wind the whistling of the poisoned arrow, and every accidental noise sounded like the dying groan of Khaled.

His first care was to send to the warrior's dwelling: the answer was, that he had departed for his country-house that morning. Amorassan's messengers were ordered to follow him, and entreat his instantaneous return. After some hours passed in the most

ainful anxiety, he saw the Chief Officer of he Police enter his apartment and heard him nnounce, that the valiant Khaled was mur-ered. The Vizir clasped his hands in agony t this confirmation of the Spirit's veracity: is voice faltered, while he inquired the man-er of Khaled's death.

—" He perished," replied the Chief of the olice, " by a poisoned arrow; but the as-assin has been seized, and is in confinement. lis name is Cassim; he has long been openly haled's inveterate enemy; and he was ound armed with a bow and quiver, close o the fatal spot."—

The Vizir accompanied the Chief of the olice to the Palace: they found Ebu-eker with the Sultan, to whom they ex-lained the melancholy occasion of their oming.

—" The news had already reached me," nswered the Sultan coldly—" I issued even ow the necessary orders for the criminal's xamination, and shall sit in judgement on im to-morrow myself."—

Having said this, Ibrahim turned away, and resumed an uninteresting conversation with Ebu-Beker.

Deeply was Amorassan affected by the evident indifference, with which the Sultan treated the loss of a man, whom he had formerly declared to be the bravest and most faithful defender of his throne, and to the victories of whose sword, he and his people had been so often indebted for security.

—"The Sultan is lost!" said he to himself; "Ebu-Beker has succeeded in making his master's heart like his own."—

This reflection added so great a weight to his former vexations, that he was scarcely able to support their burthen, much less to enter into a contest with the arts of his insidious foe. He abandoned the field to Ebu-Beker, and his trembling limbs with difficulty bore him back to his palace.

Amorassan passed a night of agony. With the dawn of morning he hastened to the Divan. The Sultan was already on his throne: his Princes surrounded him. The Vizir saw

with surprise, that by the side of Ebu-Beker stood his brother Zemaun magnificently habited: but that astonishment was considerably increased, when he also beheld his father, whom he had so lately seen on the bed of death, but who now, apparently free from all complaint but old age, stood at no great distance from the throne; while triumph and resentment reigned alternately in his eyes, as he turned them now on Zemaun, and now on Amorassan.

The Sultan gave a sign, and Cassim was brought before the assembly. The charge was read; witnesses attested, that the accused person had been found at no very great distance from the corse, armed with a bow and arrows; and the bloody shaft being produced, it was found exactly to resemble those remaining in Cassim's quiver. Cassim was now called upon to make his defence.

—"That I was long Khaled's enemy," said he, "it is not my intention to deny: my hatred was open, and its motives were

well-known.—Hurried away by zeal for the Sultan's service, he once did me an act of the most signal injustice.—In the hearing of my brothers in arms he undeservedly branded me with the name of a coward. Appearance was against me, but appearance only: when I seemed to act from cowardice, I in truth effected that object by a feigned retreat, which was not to be attained by the most courageous assault. But Khaled was unjust to me, and I felt the more resentment, because I was the first and the only one, to whom Khaled ever was unjust. Loaded with disgrace, I withdrew from the ranks of the brave, and sought a refuge from the finger of scorn in obscurity. Khaled at length discovered his mistake. Often did he sue to be reconciled; but my hatred burned as fiercely, as on the first day of my injury: Often did he knock at the door of my hut, but I still drove him away with curses. Yet within these few days he forcibly obtained an entrance, and standing upon the threshold without heeding my execrations, he addrest

e with these words; oh! never shall I rget them.

—"Hate me still, Cassim, but hear me: ill reject my friendship, but at least al- w me to be just. The Sultan has con- rred on me the government of Burglana; id if this accession of rank rejoices me, is because I am at liberty to bestow on hom I please the station next to me in ower and dignity. Thus only can I con- ince all Guzurat, how unjustly I have eated you, and that Khaled is not more able to commit an injustice, than anxious repair it."—

My hatred was unable to resist his mild me and submissive looks. He extended his and to me; I sank upon his bosom, and ose who had so long been enemies, parted iends. When he left me, he appointed a ay and hour for my meeting him at his ountry-house, and finally arranging the usiness of Burglana. With a light heart nd alone, I set forward for the habitation of ıy new-made friend; I was already near it,

when I heard the cry of murder; and before I had time to recollect myself, I was seized, informed of Khaled's death, and accused of being the assassin. I have no more to say; but what I have said is the truth!"—

He was silent. Proofs of what he had just advanced were demanded: but as he had nothing to bring forward but his bare assertion, and as he acknowledged the bloody arrow to be his property, no one entertained the least doubt of his guilt! Accordingly sentence of death was past upon him, and he was ordered for immediate execution.

This act of justice being done, and while the guards were removing Cassim, the Sultan proceeded to declare Zemaun governor of Burglana. Amorassan started: he remembered the Spirit's dreadful prophecy respecting his brother; that Spirit, whose prophecies the event had always so fatally confirmed. He shuddered.... he turned pale.... he hesitated, but it was only for a moment. The strength of his innate virtue overpowered all other sentiments, and he

resolved to risque and to endure everything, rather than by preserving a guilty neutrality tacitly to consent to the devastation of Guzurat, and the downfall of its monarch and his friend. Impressed with this idea he stepped forward; and his lips were already unclosed to remonstrate against his brother's elevation, when he suddenly perceived on every countenance (the Sultan himself not excepted) marks of the most profound consternation and alarm! All were pale, trembling, agitated, looking as if they had been struck by the wand of some supernatural power. Every eye was riveted upon a single point: Amorassan turned towards it, and lo! there stood the Spirit, with her spotless robes, her chilling looks, her calm and serious countenance, holding a bow of ebony, already bent and provided with an arrow.

The sound of her flowing garments, as she glided majestically along, was like the rushing of a tempest. With a firm air, motionless eyes, and a countenance terrible in its beauty; calm, dignified, and awful, stood the

Spirit before the Sultan's throne, and directed her arrow right against his bosom: yet was there no one among his numerous guards and courtiers, who dared utter a word, or move a finger, or advance a step, to rescue their astonished lord from the danger of that well-aimed arrow.

The Spirit spoke; and loud, and slow, and solemn, as thunder when it rolls among distant mountains, fell her words on the hearts of the petrified spectators.

—"Listen, ye sons of the dust, whose eyes are ever dazzled by appearance, by presumption, by deceit! I, the avenger of eternal justice, am come hither, armed with the never-failing bow of truth, to punish the offender, to absolve the guiltless, and to prevent the crime of shedding innocent blood. This warrior has told you true! The arrow which was produced by that subborned witness, was stolen from Cassim, substituted for the true one, and artfully stained with blood, for the purpose of misleading justice, and removing suspicion from the real murderer.

That poisoned shaft, which was in truth the cause of Khaled's death, at this moment stretches the chord of my never-erring bow! Mark me now! let the innocent rest secure, and let only the assassin tremble, while I turn myself first right, then left, till I shall have made the round of this whole assembly, not even excepting the Sultan himself: but no sooner shall my arrow point against the bosom of the assassin, than untouched by me the fatal bow-string shall sound, and the poisoned barb, which pierced the heart of Khaled, shall stand quivering in the murderer's own."—

She was silent; and now while her eyes seemed to read the very heart, she moved her bow slowly round, till it had traversed the left half of the circle. Every one shuddered, when he saw the shaft directed against his bosom; yet every one kept his posture, though with difficulty and with trembling knees. The Spirit now turned to the right, moving her bow in the same manner. Suddenly the string was heard to sound, and though the expected arrow had

not flown, Zemaun was beheld extended on the marble pavement.

—"Deluded monarch! said the Spirit, "look down, and witness the force of conscience: Khaled's murderer lies at your feet!"—

The veil was now suddenly removed from the eyes of all present; and Amorassan's heart was torn by agony scarcely to be endured. His old father lay senseless on the carpet before the Sultan's throne; while Zemaun, suddenly starting from the ground, raised his clasped hands to heaven, and exclaimed in the tone of desperation—"Accursed be my brother, my perjured brother! Eternal curses upon his inveterate enmity, upon his broken promise! I committed the bloody deed to obtain that by violence, which the Sultan was willing to grant me, but of which I was debarred through my brother's envy! Had the monarch's grace towards me been suffered to take its free course, Khaled would still be living, and I should still be innocent! 'Tis

ıy brother, who stained these hands with lood; 'tis my brother, who in fact is haled's murderer!"—

The Spirit addrest Amorassan.

—"Now then," said she, "let me see, hether your virtue can support this trial: t me see, whether you will deliver up) the vengeance of violated laws that riminal, in whose veins the same blood cir- ılates which fills your own, and whose uilt you will share, if you exert your pow- r to shelter him from punishment.—Fare- ell!"—

She said, and disappeared. The Sultan ith a faltering voice ordered the guards to lease Cassim and conduct Zemaun to pri-)n, and then hastened from the Divan, ewildered and stupefied with terror and mazement.

And now were the ears of Amorassan eafened with the curses and lamentations of is grey-headed father, whose senses were at ngth restored, and who was vainly en- eavouring to break the chains, with which

Zemaun was already loaded. Amorassan fell at his father's feet, and would have clasped his knees; but the desperate old man repulsed him with fury, and spurned him with his foot. Tears and blood at once bedewed the face of Amorassan; but he wiped them away, and bending himself still lower, kissed in submissive duty the foot, which had spurned him with such harshness.

His submission was in vain. Dreadful was the curse, which fell from the lips of the frantic father. But at the same moment a blaze of light flashed through the pavillion of mortal excellence, and illuminated the picture of Amorassan's actions.

That Spirit, which is superior to Fate, awoke in his bosom; the spirit of conscious virtue suffering undeservedly. He rose from the earth, and thus addrest Moawyah calmly, modestly, but firmly.

—"I reproach you not, my father, that your foot spurned me: had the blow even deprived me of life, in the moment of my soul's departure I would have blest you still!

Here I stand, odious to you, censured by all, and with nothing to plead for me, except the voice of my own conscience, which cannot reach the ear of man. Oh! surely could you hear that voice, you would pity your son, and think on your rash curses with regret. Your foot has spurned me; true, it was the foot of a father, but a father is still but a man: though *you* reject me, Allah will not! All here condemn me, but I retire acquitted by my own heart. This is enough for me: the rest I commit to heaven!"—

He bowed his head to his father, and casting upon him a look of mingled pity and affection, he quitted the Divan. He was summoned to the Sultan, whom he found still oppprest by the recollection of the strange and awful scene, which he had just witnessed. Ebu-Beker was present: he had already heard his master pronounce his determination to inflict on Zemaun the utmost rigour of the law, and had not dared to interpose a word in mitigation of his friend's death-warrant. Ibrahim received his Vizir

with open arms, and a countenance which exprest the greatest tenderness and compassion.

—"Unfortunate!" said he, "how hard a fate is thine! Yet let it be some comfort to you, Amorassan, that Ibrahim understands your merits, and shares your sufferings. Still continue true to yourself, and I swear by Allah, that I will ever continue true to you."—

Amorassan prest his burning lips upon the hand of the monarch.

—"My sovereign and my friend!" he said with difficulty; "I come before you bowed to the ground with my father's curse. All censure, all abhor me: for your sake and for your people's I am become the object of general detestation; if I possess not *your* approbation, then am I a wretch indeed."—

The Sultan replied by embracing him with evident emotion, and Amorassan quitted the seraglio with a bleeding heart.

THE CALIPH.

Trust me, Ben Hafi, I am heartily rejoiced, that this poor weak Sultan escaped the misfortune of punishing the innocent instead of the guilty: and in consideration of this worthy action, I am willing to be on good terms with your cold uncomfortable Spirit; who after all may be a very good sort of creature, though it so happens, that she never has any thing to tell but what is unpleasant to hear. However, I confess, she is obliged to tell the truth; and, if that truth happens to be painful, to be sure, (poor thing!) that is no fault of hers.

CHAP. IX.

—"Have I then no tears for thee, my father?
Can I forget thy cares from helpless years,
Thy tenderness for me?—Shall I for these
Repay thy stooping venerable age
With shame, disquiet, anguish, and dishonour?"—

THOMSON.

BEN HAFI.

HEAVY was the burthen, which now oppressed Amorassan's heart. He saw his brother loaded with chains and condemned to die the death of a murderer: he saw his father tearing his grey locks in despair, expiring on the bloody scaffold of one of his sons, while his last words were curses upon the other. He heard the unjust accusation of all Guzurat—"Thou art the sole cause of thy family's ruin and disgrace, and hast

richly earned the execration of thy father!"—And he now looked with horror on his connection with the mysterious Being, whose counsels had governed his proceedings, and whose fatal prophecy had compelled him to oppose his brother's exaltation.

Yet on further reflection he could not deny, that the Sultan had been on the very point of shedding innocent blood, and had only been prevented by the interposition of the Spirit. He felt also, that Khaled's murder had confirmed the character given of his brother by his mysterious counsellor; and that this one action was sufficient to prove, that by fulfilling his duty and opposing Zemaun's appointment, he had himself preserved his native land from being made the theatre of crimes still more atrocious. This idea gained additional strength, when he remembered, that Zemaun had listened without compunction to a sentence of death pronounced upon an innocent person, a sentence which ought to have fallen upon his own head; and that he had dared to return the

Sultan thanks for his new dignity in the presence of that very man, whom he was on the point of sending to the scaffold: conduct, which marked so hardened a heart, that the thought of it extinguished even brotherly compassion, and told Amorassan, that to lament the fate of such a moral monster was weakness not to be excused.

In spite therefore of the general disapprobation, of his father's hatred, of the reproaches of his other relations, of the forced politeness or avowed hostility of the courtiers, of Ebu-Beker's increasing influence, and of the Sultan's increasing coldness; in spite of all this, still would Amorassan have persevered in the course which he had chosen, and have sacrificed all other considerations to those of justice and virtue, had not his father unexpectedly summoned him to his presence. The shock of the late dreadful transactions, and the approach of the day appointed for Zemaun's execution, had now really reduced Moawyah to that dangerous situation, which (in order to carry

his point with Amorassan with the more facility) he had formerly dissembled.—Amorassan found him evidently on the brink of the grave. The cold dews of death already stood on the old man's brows, as he with difficulty beckoned to his son to advance, then grasped his hand, and pressed it against his clay-cold lips.

—"Amorassan!" he said in a voice whose murmurs were scarcely audible; "your brother.... oh! save him! suffer him not to die the ignominious death of a criminal, and I will forgive all the misfortunes, which your conduct has drawn down upon him and me! Let me not sink under the burthen of that dreadful thought,—"my son perished as a murderer, because his brother hated him,"—and I will recall my curse, and my last words shall be, 'Blessings on my son Amorassan!' Oh! hasten, hasten! I feel that my heart-strings are breaking, and will scarcely last so long as thy return."—

On his entrance Amorassan had prepared himself for curses and reproaches; but much

more powerful than all curses and reproaches were the gentle words of his imploring dying father—the pale countenance, animated alone by his only wish, by his final hope!.... the faint pressure of the chilled hands.. the eyes already glazed by dissolution.... these decided Amorassan's fate for ever!—Guzurat's welfare, duty, friendship, justice, virtue, every thing disappeared in that moment. He kissed his father's cold hand, bathed it with tears, and hastened to sacrifice all the fruits of his past labours, all his plans for the present, and all his hopes for the future; forgetting the rules which he had formerly laid down for his own conduct, and to which he had hitherto so strictly adhered; and remembering nothing, except his anxiety to smooth the death-bed of his father.

It was already night; he hastened towards the royal prison, into which a secret entrance was known to him. As he hurried along, he felt his cheeks chilled by the breath of the warning Spirit.

—"Deluded man!" whispered the Voice,

" what are you about to do? You are going to sacrifice your magnanimous designs, to exalt Ebu-Beker, to destroy the fabric of your own power, to snatch a murderer from the punishment due to his offences, and to turn him loose upon society, in order that he may commit still greater crimes!"—

Yet still Amorassan hastened onward, —at the door of the prison, he again heard the Spirit's murmur.

—" Madman that thou art! to spare a few moments of pain to an old man, who at all events will be an insensible corse to-morrow, wilt thou forget thy duty? and art thou the man, who was to be deaf to every voice but those of justice and of truth?"—

—" Ah! that old man is my father!" sighed Amorassan.

The Spirit.—Oh! partial minister! oh! violator of the laws of justice! because he is thy father's son, shall the murderer then escape unpunished?

Amorassan.—No! no!—The consciousness

of his crime will pursue him; that will be punishment enough.

The Spirit.—To Zemaun that will be none. I tell thee, his heart is hardened: release him, and under Ebu-Beker's secret protection he will commit all those crimes and bring all those misfortunes on Guzurat, which you have already heard explained by my prophetic warning."—

Amorassan hesitated for a moment; but the last words and looks of his expiring father were still present to him, and the feelings of his heart overpowered the voice of prudence and of justice. He rushed into the prison.

—"Now then," whispered the Spirit; "now then learn from bitter experience, what you gain, when you follow your own inclinations, and not my warning."—

At that moment Amorassan heard a violent uproar, which seemed to be at no great distance. It came nearer. Numerous torches were seen hurrying along in various directions. The guards, in traversing the in-

terior court of the prison (in which the Vizir was then standing), surrounded him, exclaimed, "that they had at least found an accomplice," and without listening to his remonstrances they dragged him into the presence of the governor of the prison. That officer appeared to be in the greatest confusion, when he recognized the Grand Vizir, and immediately rescued him from the hands of the tumultuous soldiery. He then informed Amorassan, that all this disorder had been occasioned by the escape of his brother Zemaun, which had but that moment been discovered, and the manner and means of which were still a secret.

Equally surprised and rejoiced at this intelligence, Amorassan returned to his father without loss of time.

—"Your wishes are gratified!" he exclaimed; "before I could reach the prison, Zemaun had found means to escape from it, and has saved himself from punishment by flight!"—

Moawyah raised his clasped hands in gra-

titude to Heaven, and the last spark of joy illuminated his faded eye. He bade Amorassan approach, that he might remove the curse from his head, and give him his dying blessing. It was in vain, that Amorassan repeated the assurance, that Zemaun had fled without his assistance. The old man was persuaded, that no power inferior to the Vizir's could have unclosed the gates of the well-guarded fortress, and was convinced, that modesty or prudence made his son deny, that he had dared to violate the Sultan's orders. He blest him with fervency; but while the old man's hands rested upon his head, Amorassan shuddered to think, that his father spoke in the belief, that for his sake the laws had been violated, and a murderer enfranchised to commit more crimes: and while this thought tormented him, he felt, that *such* a blessing could never find audience in heaven.

Moawyah now sank into a sweet and tranquil slumber. Amorassan was still watching by his father's bed-side, when he was sum-

moned to attend the Sultan. He obeyed: the saloon, in which Ibrahim was seated, was thronged with courtiers, and among them were Ebu-Beker and the governor of the royal prison.

—" I have been just informed," began the Sultan sternly, " of your brother's escape. Far let the murderer fly, and wander round the world like a perturbed spirit, till remorse brings him to an untimely grave! —His flight matters to me but little: but that you, Vizir, should have so far forgotten your duty, as to violate those laws whose assertor you ought to be, through compassion for a brother whom your affectation of over-justice compelled to become a culprit, this both surprises and affects me to the very soul: neither regard to my people nor to myself can permit so gross a violation of justice to pass with impunity. The law decrees that he, who procures the escape of a criminal, should himself suffer the penalty of the crime. The memory of our early friendship, and that af-

fection which (I own with shame) I cannot help still feeling for you, will not suffer that law to exercise its whole rigour; yet punishment of some kind ought to be in[illegible].—Retire from my presence: you will soon know your fate, and till then Zemaun's forsaken dungeon must be your abode."—

Amorassan.—Amazement!—Mighty Ibrahim, you condemn the innocent unheard! I swear by the Prophet, that I had no share in the escape of my wretched brother.

Sultan.—How? have you the assurance to deny, what is in itself so evident? Were you not found within the prison at dead of night?—Had you not entered it by a passage known only to yourself and to me? What other individual in this whole kingdom could have penetrated unseen into that iron fortress, and carried off a captive, guarded by such innumerable bolts, and bars, and walls, and soldiers?

Amorassan.—Appearances are against me; but appearances deceive.

Sultan.—What then could be your business in the prison at an hour so unseasonable?

Amorassan.—I came to do that, of which I am now accused—but the business was effected before my arrival.

Sultan.—So then! it seems, this virtue is not always so immaculate, as its master would willingly have Guzurat believe it: this inflexible justice can yield occasionally, when it suits with its own private views and passions! You confess the intention, and in what does the intention differ from the fact? And how can Amorassan himself justify his conduct even on his own grounds? Yet more; how are we to be certain of the truth of an assertion, which appears so strange? It will be sufficient to believe you innocent of your brother's escape, having such strong reasons to believe you guilty, when you can make known to us the real criminal—till then, farewell; guards lead him to prison."—

At this moment Amorassan heard the

Spirit whisper—"Draw forth the paper, which is concealed between the foldings of your girdle on the left side, and desire, that it may be read in open court: it contains the name of Zemaun's deliverer."—Amorassan found the paper and delivered it into the hands of the person who stood next to him. The Sultan gave orders for its being read aloud.—What was the astonishment of all present, when they found it to be an order to the governor of the prison for permitting Zemaun's escape, written with the Sultan's own hand, and sealed with his private signet. It also commanded the Governor to keep this order secret, on pain of death.

As he listened, a deadly paleness spread itself over Ibrahim's face: in a moment after, it gave place to the burning blush of convicted falsehood, and tears of mortified pride gushed into his eyes. The perusal was ended, and an universal silence succeeded. It was broken by the Sultan's starting from his throne, and seizing the

portant scroll. He cast a fugitive glance on it, and having ascertained that it was e original order, he asked in a terrible ice, while shame and fury struggle[illegible] ıpire in his countenance.—" Vizir ! [illegible]w me you by this paper ?"—

Amorassan answered with humility—" It s proved my innocence, and more needs ıt to be said—Mighty Sultan, permit me retire, to close the eyes of my dying fa- er, and commit his ashes to the tomb."— The Sultan bowed his head in silence, d Amorassan withdrew.

THE CALIPH.

Let me not live, Ben Hafi, if this was ıt a most scurvy trick of your Sultan ! d had he really charged his friend with at as a crime, of which he was himself e author ?

BEN HAFI.

He had indeed ; such was the consequence his intimacy with Ebu-Beker. That insi-

dious counsellor had gradually taught the Sultan to consider Amorassan as the original cause of Zemaun's offence. He lamented over the Vizir's too strict adherence to justice, which had involved his brother in blood; had brought down upon himself the curses of his father; had made him be looked upon by all Guzurat as a man, who sacrificed the ties of nature to the gratifications of envy and ambition; and had even induced the people to censure the Sultan himself for intrusting his power to a minister so odious. He then expatiated upon Zemaun's military talents, his youth, his misfortunes, and the services of his father; and the Sultan was persuaded to authorize Zemaun's escape from prison and from punishment.

He fled; and now came the news, that Amorassan had been found within the precincts of the royal prison. Ebu-Beker immediately turned this circumstance to his own advantage.—He told the Sultan, that by laying the blame upon the Vizir's compas-

on for his brother, the public indignation : his former inflexibility would be abated: e reminded him, that had it not been for morassan's pretentions to immaculate vir- ue, Zemaun would still have been innocent, haled would still have been alive! and he ssured him, that if he could but humble he Vizir's pride a little, by convicting him f a supposed fault, he would make him nore indulgent to the feelings of human ature for the future, and thus would ren- er him a most essential service. Ibrahim vas easily convinced by these arguments, r at least fancied that he was convinced y them: the real motive, which (unknown o himself) made him consent to this ac- usation, was a secret inclination to morti- y that faultless excellence, which soared to pitch so far above the flight of all others, nd to bring it down a little nearer to his wn level.

But now when he found the tables turned pon him, and that he stood convicted of a most gross and wilful falsehood in the face

of his whole court, his vexation was without bounds: and Amorassan's triumph over him was a much more atrocious crime in his eyes, than that transgression would have been of which he had so wrongfully accused him.

Envy, spite, rage, jealousy, all took possession of the Sultan's heart at once: to be revenged he was determined; and he now resolved to take that step respecting which he had so long hesitated, for the sole and express purpose of mortifying Amorassan, and acting contrary to his advice and inclination.

Accordingly, he the next day announced, that Ebu-Beker would henceforth execute the functions of Chief-Cadi.

CHAP. X.

—" Πονοι κοινοι λογων,
Ομοστεγος τε και συνεστιος βιος,
Νυς εις εν αμφοιν,
Διεσκεδεσται παντα, ερριπται χαμαι ;
Αυραι φερουσι τας παλαιας ελπιδας."—

Gregory Nazianzen.

—" Our common studies, in our breasts one mind,
Our lives from youth by choice and habit joined,
These fragile bonds now sink in swift decay :
Far bear the winds each long-loved hope away!"—

AMORASSAN was sorrowing by the side of his father's tomb, when the news of his enemy's advancement reached him : it grieved him more for the Sultan's sake, than for

his own, and for Guzurat's more than for the Sultan's: for Ibrahim's perfidious and spiteful conduct respecting his brother's escape, had wounded his heart too deeply to permit the existence of their former friendship in all its original warmth and purity.

He now stood alone in the world, at once opprest with the weight of his brother's infamy, his father's death, the loss of the Sultan's confidence, Ebu-Beker's enmity, and the universal hatred: for the people were persuaded, that he had driven his brother to perdition and had broken his father's heart: and they could not easily believe, that the man who dealt so hardly by his nearest relations, could possibly mean kindly by them.

But to obtain their gratitude was not Amorassan's object, and willingly would he have passed his whole life in heaping blessings on those, who loaded him with curses: but alas! his activity was palsied, and doubt bewildered all his thoughts. Every plan which his genius inspired, every wish

which his heart formed, immediately faded away before the chilling breath of his persecutor, who forced him to remark all the dangers and difficulties, and all the disadvantageous consequences which must necessarily accompany the execution. If Amorassan stretched out his hand to do a benevolent action, the warning Spirit made it drop again inactive, by coldly pointing out the worthlessness of the person, or the defects in his project for relieving him. If he prepared to give his opinion in the Divan, the Spirit never failed to place before him the opposite side of the question; and as mortals can give no advice to which there are not some objections, and take no important step without the benefits being necessarily accompanied by some disadvantages, he felt doubtful of the propriety of giving such an opinion, and the advice expired upon his lips, unsaid.

On the other hand Ebu-Beker's activity seemed indefatigable—he lost no time in hesitating; he resolved, and the thing was

done at once. As his actions were adapted to the momentary occasion, they in general were attended with success; but if his projects failed, what mattered it to him? His only care was to conceal his failure from the Sultan: who, on the other hand, found the business of government greatly alleviated by the despatch of his new minister, and began to consider Amorassan as a well-meaning man, but totally without talents for business and unfit for the station of Grand Vizir.

Such was the state of things, when one evening as Amorassan sat by his father's tomb absorbed in deep but not unpleasing melancholy, the warning Spirit suddenly appeared before him.

—"Tremble as thou mayst," said the persecutor, "frown, if thou wilt, but thou must hear me; for necessity (thy master and mine) compels *me* to speak, and *thee* to listen. This morning did Ebu-Beker sit in judgment for the last time upon Sanballad, the governor of the royal prison,

from whom, for your sake, I secretly withdrew the Sultan's order for your brother's flight. This man has been accused of delivering that order into your hands, which he was commanded to keep secret on pain of death. His sentence is already pronounced, for he can produce no proofs of his innocence. In his mortal agony he appeals to you; he implores you to divulge the means, by which you obtained that paper: his life and death are both in your power; what will you do?"

Amorassan.—Can you doubt it? Fly to the Sultan, declare that that paper was given me by you....

The Spirit.—By me? a supernatural being? and thereby show yourself to the Sultan as a practiser of forbidden arts, as a sorcerer, as an ally of Eblis....

Amorassan.—Let him think me so! better that the Sultan, nay, that all Guzurat should shun and abhor me, than that this innocent man should perish on my account.

The Spirit.—Do this, and you are Vizir

no moment longer—act as you will, but forget not, that I warned you of the consequences.

Amorassan.—Oh! that I had never heard, had never heeded thy warnings!

The Spirit.—I own, you would have been happier; yet blame not me. It was not my fault, that you aimed at uniting what was in their nature incompatible—the warm enthusiasm which animates men to noble deeds, and that cold prudence which foresees and reckons all their various consequences.

Amorassan.—I am at length undeceived, dreadfully undeceived. Be satisfied with what I have already suffered; warn me no more; leave me and for ever.

The Spirit.—Whether I stay with you, or whether I leave you, to me matters nothing, but you have bound my destiny to yours: till your fate shall be unravelled, I must pursue you still.

Amorassan.—And when then will my fate be decided?

The Spirit.—I was not permitted to read

the last leaf. Oh! were I able to show you *this* also, wretched man, what would there be left for you to hope! Hark! a messenger enters your palace to summon you to the Sultan. What mean you to do?—

Amorassan.—To declare all to the Sultan, appeal to his former friendship, to the memory of our happy hours of youth, to his *heart*!

The Spirit.—Do it; and become the object of universal fear and horror, as much as you are now an example of misery and mischance! Now then, I leave the *Vizir* for ever; but *Amorassan* must not hope to escape me!"—

The Spirit disappeared, and the messenger entered; Amorassan followed him to the Seraglio.

—"Mighty Ibrahim!" he exclaimed, while he threw himself at the Sultan's feet, and clasped his knees, "if ever I possest a place in your heart, if ever you thought me worthy of your confidence, be moved

by my entreaties, give credit to the oath which I now take! May the lightnings of Heaven strike me dead before your eyes, if Sanballad be not innocent of the fault laid to his charge! he did not give me that fatal paper; he knows not, by what means I procured it.

Ibrahim.—And what then were those means?

Amorassan.—Be gracious, and suffer me to remain silent. To explain this mysterious circumstance could produce no advantage, and might occasion much distress.

Ibrahim.—It is enough! continue obstinate, I will remain so too: preserve your mysterious secret, as I will my resolution. If Sanballad is really guiltless, it rests with you to prove his innocence: if you remain silent, he dies, and his blood be upon *your* head, not mine! now save him, or condemn him, for both depend on you.

Amorassan.—Oh! Ibrahim! and do then the memory of our long union entitle

me to no more confidence from my friend?

Ibrahim.—And can you still pretend to my confidence? Amorassan, do I possess yours? Your late mysterious behaviour, the coldness with which you received my caresses, the care with which you kept your heart closed against me, were these likely to preserve my confidence? And dares the man, who has treated me thus so long, still call himself my friend? Amorassan, you are no longer the man, whom I once loved so heartily! no longer, did I say? Oh! you never were the man, whom I believed you to be, the man who merited my affection so well.

Amorassan.—I was that man, I am that man still; and if ever I deserved your friendship then, a thousand times more do I deserve it at this moment, the most painful one of my whole life.

Ibrahim—Prove it then by saving the life of the accused Sanballad; for if you perse-

vere in this obstinate silence, innocent, or guilty, Sanballad dies!

Amorassan.—Ibrahim! I entreat!. .'I conjure....

Ibrahim—I have said it! he dies! by Allah, he dies at sunrise.

Amorassan.—Fate, thou hast conquered, and I bow beneath thy power.—Now mark me, Ibrahim!

Words cannot paint the Sultan's surprize and anxiety, while he listened to Amorassan's account of the Egyptian sorcerer; but no sooner was the appearance of the Spirit described, than he uttered an exclamation of alarm and horror, and drew back some paces from Amorassan.

—"Answer me!" he cried, "that dreadful being, who stood before my throne armed with the bow and arrow, and who discovered the concealed murderer.... was not this thy Spirit!"—

Amorassan.—It was the same!

Ibrahim—Amorassan! and could you then enter into this dangerous league, unknown

to me? and could you then live with me in the strictest intimacy so long, and still retain by your side a being, whose very recollection makes my blood run cold? You shut your own heart against me; you employed the most unwarrantable means to become master of the secrets of mine; and yet you still called me your friend?

Amorassan.—It was for your sake.... for the sake of your kingdom....

Ibrahim.—Away with these pretences; they cannot impose upon me any longer! Your own incapability of friendship made you doubt the stability of mine; ambition made you tremble for your station, and you scrupled not to employ infernal arts to preserve it. You dared not to confide in me, in human nature, nay not even in yourself; and who then will dare to confide in *you?* Who will endure the presence of one, by whose side an invisible ally ever stands to enable him to dissect the hearts of others, and teach him to conceal the real emotions

of his own? You have broken all the bonds of society; you stand no more on the same level with other men; you act no longer from the motives, from which other men act.—It is this chilling, dreadful being, who has forced our hearts asunder; you have preferred her friendship to mine, and now enjoy the fruits of your supernatural alliance!—Hence from my sight! never let me see you more!"—

With every appearance of abhorrence and disgust, the Sultan hastened out of the saloon.—Amorassan returned home, commanded his slaves to load the camels with his treasures, and before break of day, Amedabad was left far behind him.

THE CALIPH.

To tell you the truth, Ben Hafi, though this poor deceived Sultan is no particular favourite of mine, on the present occasion I cannot greatly blame him. In Ibrahim's place, I should have done the very same

thing: and in spite of Amorassan's merits, I should rather have parted with him, than have kept such a disagreeable Spirit continually about me—though after all I think, that Ebu-Beker was a much more dangerous companion for the Sultan, than the Spirit would have been.

MUZAFFER.

Permit me to observe, Commander of the Faithful, that so far was this Spirit from being dangerous, that she would have been a most inestimable ally to a minister, who knew how to make a proper use of her.—Why did not Amorassan follow her advice, and exert himself to ruin Ebu-Beker, before he had time to obtain the Sultan's confidence, and estrange his heart from his Vizir?

BEN HAFI.

Because Amorassan did not resemble Muzaffer!

THE CALIPH.

Nay, that is certain, Ben Hafi; I really think, I never knew two people more unlike.—But what became of Amorassan, after he left Amedabad?

CHAP. XI.

—"Away!—the foul fiend follows me."—
KING LEAR.

BEN HAFI.

AMORASSAN wandered onwards, followed by his slaves and loaded camels. Where he laid his weary head, was now a matter of indifference to him: Yet recollecting a dear and faithful friend, who inhabited a distant province, he resolved to direct his steps thither, and shelter his misfortunes under his hospitable roof.

He found there what he sought, grateful hearts, a kind reception, compassion, and repose. Here then he resolved to pass the remainder of his life in tranquil ob-

scurity: but scarcely had three days elapsed, when in the twilight his persecuting Spirit stood before him.

—"Away, Amorassan!" she exclaimed; "call your slaves; let your camels be loaded; you must be gone this very night. The Grand-Vizir, Ebu-Beker..... ha! at those words how the colour fades from your cheek!—The Grand-Vizir, Ebu-Beker, has been entrusted by his sovereign with your secret: he has not failed to employ it to effect your complete destruction. He has convinced the Sultan, that you are a necromancer; that his former affection for you was produced by spells and talismans; and that all the misfortunes with which his kingdom has been visited, were the consequence of your alliance with the infernal powers. Ibrahim has abandoned you to the Vizir's malignity; the guards are now hastening hither, and if you are found, you will perish as a sorcerer by a fiery death.

Amorassan.—And let me perish then! life

is become hateful to me, and I will not wander further to preserve it.

The Spirit.—Thou must not perish, and thou shalt wander further.

Amorassan.—What can compel me?

The Spirit.—That, which you summoned me from the islands of gloom to counteract; your heart!—mark me—your Host will never consent to surrender you to the Sultan's guards. He will either perish in defending you, or be compelled to share your flight, and tear himself from all that is dear to him. He has a wife.... children .... friends.... Ebu-Beker's vengeance will fall heavy upon them; his possessions will be confiscated; his family will perish in misery; your friend will never cease to lament their loss, and will sink into the grave broken-hearted. Your flight can alone rescue him from these misfortunes; now then, Amorassan, remain here, if your heart will let you."—

—"Away! away!" cried the Unfor-

tunate to his slaves, and in a few hours they were once more upon their journey.

It was evident, that in Guzurat there was no safety for Amorassan. He resolved to take shelter in the neighbouring kingdom of Candeish. His road lay through Burglana, and he was already within a day's journey of the frontiers, when he perceived a small troop of travellers, who, attacked by robbers far superior in number, still defended themselves with the greatest bravery.

—"Oh! Allah!" he exclaimed, "that I might but lose my own wretched life in preserving that of a fellow-creature!"—

He commanded his attendants to unsheathe their sabres, and follow him. He gave his Arabian steed the spur, and darting down the hill, from whose brow he had descryed the combatants, was on the point of joining them; when—"Right! Right!" he heard the Spirit whisper; "hasten onwards! lose no time; save the villain's life, that he may

become still more a villain, and then own the truth of my prediction! The man, who fights yonder, is your brother Zemaun, is Zemaun the murderer!"—

—"May he become my murderer too!" replied the desperate Amorassan; "thus at least I shall be freed from thy persecutions!"—

He urged his courser forwards with increased speed, fell upon the robbers, and decided the combat. Part of them fled; the rest were bound. Amorassan now advanced towards his brother, and extended his hand; but no sooner did Zemaun recognize him, than with frantic gestures and dreadful execrations he forbade his approach, at the same time threatening him with his unsheathed sabre. In vain did Amorassan attempt to appease him; Zemaun's rage increased with every moment. At length Amorassan divided his well-laden camels into two parts, left the richest share with his brother, and then with a heavy heart resumed his journey.

But scarcely had Zemaun lost sight of him, when the thirst of vengeance, and desire to possess his brother's remaining treasures, took possession of his bosom. He imparted his plans to his companions, and procured their assistance: he offered to set free the captive banditti, provided they would elect him for their chief. His proposals were accepted; he set forward with his new associates, easily overtook Amorassan in the desart, plundered the little caravan, and thus became the captain of a band of robbers, as the warning Spirit had foretold.

—"Rich in virtue," he exclaimed to the bewildered Amorassan, "you need no other possessions. Your virtue, has made me a fugitive, an out-cast, a robber: now let us see, what it will make of *you*. I now behold you such as I was myself, on that day when I was compelled to preserve my life by flight: but fortune smiles on me once more; and by the help of my good sword and these my brave companions, I doubt

ıot soon to regain by plunder more, than have lost through my brother's spite and nvy. I leave you life, not from any sense of kindness, but because I trust, that an existence so miserable will punish you with very moment for the sufferings, which you ıave inflicted upon me."—

Amorassan sank upon the earth, and without speaking envelloped his head in his garment.

The sun soon poured his blazing fire over these unbounded désarts, where the eye was not gratified by the sight of a single bush, no, not of a single blade of grass! The robbers were gone, and had carried off his slaves, his camels, and his treasures. Amorassan was left alone. He wandered onward, while the burning sand scorched the soals of his feet, and while the only moisture, which dewed the earth beneath, was the tears which fell from Amorassan's smarting eye-lids. And now a thick gloom overspread the heavens. The whirlwind was rouzed; columns of sand rose into the air,

and the waste beneath seemed agitated like the ocean. The thunder rolled heavily over Amorassan's head, and no cave was nigh to afford him shelter. The whirlwind enveloped him; it raised him from the ground, and then dashed him down again with violence. He struggled, with every effort sank deeper, and was conscious that he was only struggling to dig his own grave in the sand. He resigned himself to his fate, and soon lost all recollection.

THE CALIPH.

My good Ben Hafi, if you make this unhappy man suffer much longer, I shall never be able to hear your story out. Pry'thee, if you can do it without spoiling your narrative, bring him some relief with all speed; even in a tale, it grieves me to see a good man suffer.

BEN HAFI.

Be all your wishes fulfilled like this! Amorassan's help is at hand.

CHAP. XII.

—"In woeful measures, wan despair;
Slow sullen strains her grief beguil'd:
A mingled, strange, and solemn air,
By fits 'twas sad, by starts 'twas wild."—

COLLINS.

In this melancholy condition was our hero found the next day by a caravan, which accident conducted thither. A young man, (his name was Massouf,) whose camels had been hired by the merchants, was the first who discovered him. He stopped the march, restored the suspended powers of animation in Amorassan, and when he understood his forlorn condition, proffered him a shelter in the Carnatic. The unfortunate man accept-

ed the proposal with gratitude, and soon found himself a welcome guest in the family of the benevolent Massouf.

That family was a perfect model of domestic happiness. Massouf had a young and blooming wife, whom he loved with his whole soul, and whose bosom gave nourishment to his first child. Oh! while he gazed with tender emotion on these wedded lovers, blest in the enjoyment of tranquil obscurity and domestic comfort, how did Amorassan lament his own hard fate, which had condemned him to be a monarch's friend, a favourite, and a Grand-Vizir!

One morning the lovely Fatme was reposing under the poplars, which shaded her dwelling; her child was in her arms, and all the heart-felt tenderness of a mother was pourtrayed in every look, which she cast upon the smiling infant. Every movement of his little hands, every indistinct murmur which issued from his coral lips, seemed to afford her such delight, as all the world's wealth could not purchase. Sometimes she

exprest her rapture by a thousand names of endearment, and then again she sang some infantine ditty, and hushed him to sleep upon her bosom.

Amorassan stood opposite to her, and while he viewed this picture of maternal love, he felt, that happiness existed upon earth; nay, at that moment he felt, that he was himself happy. He dwelt with pleasure on the thought, that, nourished by this tender mother, and protected by so good a father, the child would grow up in innocence, and when grown up, would be placed in a station of life, whose rural quiet and enviable obscurity would form him for virtue and domestic happiness. His heart overflowed with a tender benevolent emotion, and he blest the fond mother and her child.

Fatme returned into the house, for her infant had now fallen asleep. Amorassan's eyes still followed her with delight, when the sight of the Spirit made his cheeks turn pale, and the tears of pleasure which glittered in his eyes, seemed changed into

ice by the freezing breath of his persecutor.

—" You see," she began, " that I forget not my duty. Whom would not the sight of this affectionate mother and her innocent babe deceive? But you have commanded me to warn you against deceptions; others may enjoy such delightful illusions; but they must not be enjoyed by *you*.

" Here in this very place, in thirteen months and two days from this time, will that child become the prey of the monstrous snake, the Anaconda, whose very name makes the hearers tremble! If you repeat my prophecy to the mother, she will start in horror and turn pale, as you do now: and yet will she forget that day and that hour when it arrives, for by that time her marriage-vow will be already broken; and clasped in the licentious embraces of a man (whom she now abhors) she will not remember the danger, till the fatal moment is past, and her child is become the prey of the hungry Anaconda."—

—" Murderer of my happiness!—of my repose!" thus exclaimed Amorassan, and tore out whole ringlets of his hair in agony; " thou art no warning counsellor! no daughter of the world of light!—thou art a tormenting dæmon! thou art to me the Spirit of Despair!"—

—" Hast thou guest it at last?" answered the Spirit; " right! Despair is my truest name indeed; and the moment, when that word escaped from thy lips, was appointed by destiny to lay before thee the full extent and fatal consequences of thy folly and thy pride—hear me!"—

—" Never! Never!" shrieked Amorassan; " herald of evil tidings, never will I hear thee more."—And with frantic desperation he rushed towards a neighbouring precipice, whose base was washed by the ocean. He reached the summit; but there already stood the Spirit in all her freezing, overwhelming majesty, and Amorassan remained rooted to his place, immoveable as a statue.

—" Short-sighted mortal!" said the Spirit,

" hear, what thy bond-slave has to tell thee, then die, if thou wilt: I shall view thy fall from this precipice, calmly as the descent of the autumnal leaf. All that you have commanded, have I punctually fulfilled. I have placed the truth before you: I have enabled you to read the hearts of others; I have dispelled the illusions of your own. Now mark, what would have happened, had you trusted to the power of virtue and the protection of heaven, and left me undisturbed in the winter of my gloomy islands.

—" Yes! Ebu-Beker would still have obtained the Sultan's favour, would still have risen to power and dignity; but your genius, unembarrassed by doubts, and confident in the rectitude of your intentions, would have enabled you to counteract the baleful effects of his power. The Sultan's heart would still have been estranged from you, but only estranged for a time. Trusting in his friendship, because you felt that you deserved it, and that your own for him was undiminished, you would have combatted Ebu-Beker's

artifices with the irresistible arms of truth and candour. You would honestly have laid before the Sultan your hopes, your fears, your doubts: the coldness of his affection would have melted before the warmth of yours; and while he felt, that your confidence in him was unbounded, you would still have preserved a share in the Sultan's. Your brother would still have been a villain; but it depended on yourself, whether it should be your hand or Ebu-Beker's, which led him to the commission of crimes. Had you through affectionate weakness complied with your father's request, and made Zemaun Governor of Burglana, he would have betrayed that province to the enemy, and blood would have deluged the fertile plains of Guzurat: but this would only have furnished you with the more brilliant opportunity for displaying your courage and your fidelity, your love for your native land, and the resources of your genius. The sense of danger would have revived in Ibrahim's memory the consciousness of your talents. You

would have been recalled to power: Khaled would have been still alive to execute your desires; and with the hand of strength to weild the sword of his armies, and with the head of wisdom to direct his counsels, soon would the Sultan of Guzurat have triumphed over all his enemies. Zemaun made captive, would have owned with gratitude, that he was indebted for life to his brother's intercession: Ebu-Beker's perfidy would have been discovered, and his head falling on the scaffold would have paid the price of his crimes: the Sultan's whole heart would again have been yours, and yours for ever; and then might he indeed have become such a man as you fondly believed him to be, and such a monarch as you so earnestly desired to make him.

Amorassan.—Oh! thou perfidious counsellor! What prevented my producing effects so blessed—what but thy prophetic warnings?

The Spirit.—What I prophecied was true; what I prophecied has happened, and must

have happened; but it depended on yourself alone, whether or not it should happen through your agency. Was it I who sought you? Was it I, who needed your ministry? Amorassan, weep, rave, despair; but blame no one except yourself.

Yes! despair! for now learn the whole extent of the miseries, which your presumptuous pride has drawn down upon your native land. Zemaun lays waste the frontier-provinces; the robbers, from whom you rescued him, fight beneath his banners; the treasures, which you were the means of throwing into his power, have enabled him to multiply the number of his adherents; Burglana is deluged with blood, and he prepares to carry his ravages and his vengeance into the very heart of Guzurat. All is terror; all is tumult; and the armies of Candeish will soon take advantage of the general confusion and dismay. Nor will the enemy's approach be unwelcome to Amedabad, so heavily do its wretched inmates feel the iron sway of Ebu-Beker. Every hour sees

the scaffold stained with innocent blood: every hour hears the shrieks of the widow and the orphan, deprived of fathers and husbands by Ebu-Beker's cruelty, and robbed of subsistence to gratify Ebu-Beker's avarice.

Amorassan.—And does the Sultan know all this, yet not redress it? Oh! how must his heart be changed! What, Ibrahim! whose virtues, whose character of mind....

The Spirit.—His mind has *no* character; his virtues were but the reflection of your own. You were the object of his admiration, and while she spoke through your lips, he fancied, that he loved Virtue: but you wilfully resigned the empire of his fancy; another now reigns in your stead, and the Sultan only sees and hears with the eyes and ears of Ebu-Beker. In vain flows the blood of the innocent. In vain do the streets of Amedabad ring with the shrieks of sorrow, with the execrations of despair! When he ceased to love *you*, Ibrahim ceased to believe in the existence of virtue. He considers you as a hypocrite, an impostor,

the slave of self-interest, and a practiser of infernal arts; and believing *you* to be worthless, he despairs of finding others deserving. Persuaded of the falsehood of him, by whom they were inculcated, he believes your principles to have been false as yourself, and he now rules his empire on the principles of Ebu-Beker: yet the softness of his heart makes him still regret the happy days, when he believed virtue to be no phantom; he still most bitterly laments, that your perfidy dispelled that fond and fair illusion; and when he hears the curses of his people, he curses *you!*

Amorassan.—Have mercy! Let me die!

The Spirit.—As thou wilt! I with-hold thee no longer.

She lowered her hand, and Amorassan dashed himself head-long from the precipice.

THE CALIPH.

Ah! barbarous Ben Hafi! And did the Unfortunate perish thus? Save him this instant, I charge you; I am now more anxious

than ever for his preservation; for as his insupportable Spirit has taken her leave of him, there are hopes that the poor man may at length enjoy a little peace and comfort. Now then, Ben Hafi, let us hear what became of him.

CHAP. XIII.

—"The fairest flowers the vale prefer,
And shed their sweetest odours there;
While the tall pine and mountain oak
Oft feel the tempest's rudest stroke.

Here in this lowly moss-grown seat
Calm peace and rural quiet dwell;
The storms, which rack the rich and great,
Fly harmless o'er the shepherd's cell."—

SHENSTONE.

BEN HAFI.

THE ocean received Amorassan, but not
r ever. When his senses returned to him,
e found himself stretched on the sea-shore,
hile by his side knelt an ancient fisherman,

who welcomed his return to life with a smile expressing the most sincere and benevolent pleasure.

—" Where am I?" inquired Amorassan, after a few minutes past in silent recollection; " how came I here?"—

Alcouz (for that was the fisherman's name) replied, " that while watching his nets, he had for some time observed him on the cliff above in earnest conversation with a person of singular habit and appearance, and that he at length saw him as if seized by sudden giddiness fall from the summit of the precipice into the billows which bathed its foot: that he had immediately left his nets, jumped into the sea, and brought him safe to land, where the pleasure of seeing him revive had amply repaid him for his labour and his danger."—

Amorassan thanked his preserver with every mark of heart-felt gratitude; adding with a sigh,—" thanks are all, which it is in my power to give you in return for the preservation of my life."—

" Not so," replied Alcouz, " for if your inclination be as hearty as you say, our meeting may be fortunate enough for both of us. I have made to-day (at least I guess so) the richest draught of fish, that ever fell in my way since I first threw a line. My nets are so full that I have been long labouring without success to bring them to land; now if you will return the service which I have done you, by lending me a helping h nd with my booty, I shall think myself richly repaid, and you shall have an ample share of the prize into the bargain."—

These words, the tone in which they were spoken, the friendly looks which accompanied them, seemed like balm to the wounded heart of Amorassan.

—" You have saved my life," said he, while he took the fisherman's hand; " you have a right to my services; command them! and if you dare put so much confidence in me, grant the rights of hospitality to a wretch, who has no place on earth

to rest his head. Gladly will I render you every service of which I am capable, or which you can teach me: but I fear, you will find me an awkward and unapt assistant, though not one deficient in attention or good will."—

"Mahomet himself would require no more," replied Alcouz, and then led the way to the nets. Amorassan laboured with his whole strength; the draught was a rich one, and nearly filled the fisherman's little bark. This important business accomplished, Alcouz steered homewards, and the new associates soon reached a small but neat-looking cottage, at no great distance from the city of Meliopour.

On hearing the fisherman's voice, who loudly proclaimed the day's success, his daughter unclosed the window, and wished him joy of his good fortune. The sun was just sinking into the western waves, and the reflection of its glow threw a veil of the softest roseate light over the smiling face of the maiden. Amorassan gazed upon her with admiration, but he was suffered

to contemplate the lovely sight but for a moment. No sooner was she aware of a stranger's presence, than she concealed her face with her veil; and then accompanied by her aged nurse, she came forth to assist her father in conveying his prize into the cottage.

Alcouz now presented the females to Amorassan, and informed them of the essential service, which he had rendered him in assisting to bring his nets on shore. Amorassan on the other hand, maintained, that he had only repaid in a very small part his obligations, and related the manner, in which Alcouz had preserved his life at the risk of losing his own.

—" And yet my father is the most indebted of the two," said the maiden; " what he did for you, was a mere act of humanity, and done without reflection; but what you did for him, must have been a painful sacrifice. Your language and appearance make it evident, that you are not accustomed to such mean offices; and

therefore while you rendered him your aid, you must have either felt your pride wounded, or at least must have sorely remembered the extent of your misfortunes. Gratitude overpowered these feelings; but alas! good stranger, the effort must have cost you much."—

It was now, that Alcouz for the first time observed, what his daughter's more acute observation had penetrated with a single glance. With some embarrassment he entreated the stranger's pardon for having treated him with so little respect, when it was evident, that he was entitled to so much.

—"Good old man," said Amorassan in a dejected tone, "I am an unfortunate! I am an outcast from society, bereft of all my friends, persecuted by many enemies: but I swear to you, that I am innocent, if he dares call himself so, who has murmured against the dispensations of Heaven, and quarrelled with the imperfections of man. I have no resting place on earth, no roof to shelter my head from the tempest. Have

pity on me! Grant me the rights of hospitality!"—

He had not ceased to speak, when the damsel approached in trembling eagerness, and tendered a cup of water with a cluster of freshly-gathered grapes. He tasted the fruit and water, and as he returned the cup into her hands, she thanked him for his acceptance with a benevolent smile.

—"Ask not who I am," he continued; "suffer me to render you such services, as are within my power; and when we have tried each other sufficiently, you shall know, to whom you have so generously afforded your protection."—

—"But yet," said the girl with timidity; "but yet *we* have all of us some name or other. My father is called Alcouz, my nurse Dilara; my name is Leilah; and yours....?"—

—"Call me," answered Amorassan, "call me Zeyn; that is my name at present."—

The women now placed the frugal meal upon the table; when it was finished, Leilah

sang to her lute, and while he listened to her sweet and plaintive voice, Amorassan forgot his misfortunes. After an evening past in happiness, he was conducted into a small but cleanly chamber, and as he laid his head upon his pillow—"Thou fearful Persecutor," said he to himself, "visit me no more, and I am saved."—

Zeyn (for as he was only known by that name in the fisherman's family, by that name he must be called henceforward) was treated from this moment as the adopted son of his kind host. He exerted all his powers to repay such benevolent protection; and success crowned his toil so uniformly, that frequently did Alcouz repeat—"the blessings of Allah came into my house with Zeyn."—The heart of the young man bounded with joy, as he heard the sentence; for so completely had despondency crushed his spirit, that he had till then looked on himself, as on a wretch destined to bring misfortune, wherever his accursed footsteps fell. But now he again raised his head,

and existence again became valuable in his eyes, for he felt, that there were beings in the world, to whose happiness his existence was of consequence.

In this manner had several months past away, when the venerable Alcouz, by sleeping imprudently in his boat at night, contracted a malady, which terminated in his losing the total use of his limbs. Zeyn tended him during his illness, as if he had really been his son; he now undertook alone the charge of supporting the family; and in the intervals of labour he omitted no means of cheering the old man's deprest spirits, and soothing his sufferings by discourses of hope and consolation. Daily he bore the helpless Alcouz on his shoulders to an open place near the city, which was planted with stately trees, in order that he might enjoy the freshness of the air, the pleasant shade, the songs of the birds, and the occasional society of his passing acquaintance: and the neighbours, who saw him constantly pass along with his venerable burthen, blest his

filial piety, and prayed, that their chilldren might but show them as much affection, as Alcouz experienced from the youthful stranger.

—"My friend! My son!" said the fisherman, one day while he gazed upon Zeyn affectionately, and tears of gratitude filled his eyes; "were it not for you, what a miserable wretch should I be at this moment! An helpless cripple, who must lie down and die of hunger with his poor innocent child, or must owe a precarious existence to the charity of passers-by! Ah! never did the sea yeild me so rich a prize, as when I snatched you from its billows! Even my bodily sufferings scarcely seem to me a misfortune, the solicitude and the pleasure, which you seem to feel in relieving them, makes my heart glow so warm and beat so grateful. And yet it is very hard, that you should be obliged to labour singly to support us all! How happy should I feel, were it not for this care. . . . and one other. . . .

Zeyn.—What is that other care?

Alcouz.—Ah! I should long ago have entrusted you with it, could you have relieved it, as you do the rest: but that may not be! you are not of our station: you have, it is true, lowered yourself to us, (as my daughter says,) and at present deign to share our obscurity and want: but justice cannot long leave a man like you in misfortune, (at least so says my daughter,) and therefore any connexion which you form with us, must be considered as merely temporary. I confess, at first I thought otherwise; but my daughter convinced me, that she was in the right, and therefore I must take my anxiety with me into the grave undivulged.

Zeyn.—If that anxiety regards your daughter, let me spare you the necessity of revealing it. You have long treated me with the affection of a father; you have bestowed on me the name of your son. Worthy Alcouz, give me with Leilah's hand a title to that name!"—

The good old man was unable to answer, but he pointed to the road conducting

him to his cottage. Leilah stood on the threshold, and hastened with anxious tenderness to inquire, what brought her father home so much before his accustomed hour. Alcouz told her, what had past; and the Maiden blushed as deeply, as when on the first evening of their meeting the setting sun illuminated her countenance with its roseate light. Zeyn placed his hand in that of the trembling girl, and pronounced the vow of eternal affection. As the words past his lips, he recollected the warning Spirit. The blood fled from his cheeks, as he cast a look of fearful inquiry round him; and oh! from what an oppressive weight did his heart feel relieved, when his eye encountered not the chilling glance of that dreaded enemy.

MUZAFFER.

Manifold as have been the follies of your fantastic Hero, Ben Hafi, this last surpasses them all! What! a poor fisherman's daugh-

ter become the wife of the Grand-Vizir of Guzurat, whose power....

THE CALIPH.

In the name of heaven, Muzaffer, do not interrupt Ben Hafi; I had quite forgotten, that Amorassan had ever had the calamity of being a Vizir, and now only recollected, that he was fortunate enough to be a virtuous man! Go on, go on, Ben Hafi! Tell your tale according to your own fancy; introduce as many Fishermen, and Cripples, and Beggars as you chuse; they shall all be welcome to me, and my only objection to their introduction is, that it is not in my power to make them all rich, and all well, and all happy.

CHAP. XIV.

—"Oh! Conspiracy,
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage?"—

JULIUS CÆSAR

BEN HAFI.

It was midnight when Zeyn sought the sea-shore, in hope that a lucky hawl would enable him to furnish the table on his wedding-day more plenteously than usual. He steered towards the rocks, threw out his nets, and having fastened his little bark to the shrubs which were rooted at its base, he for the first time ventured to ascend the precipice, on which he had formerly

endured all the agonies of dying. It was here, that he determined to wait for sunrise.

He was weary with rowing, and the awakening morning air blew keen and cutting. To guard himself from the blast, he entered a narrow clift of the rock, laid himself down, and was soon buried in slumber.

But he had not long enjoyed this repose, when he was rouzed by the sound of voices; they ascended from a cave in the lower part of the rock, which happened to be exactly under the place where he was resting. He listened, and heard the whole details of a plot formed against the government of the Sultan of the Carnatic. He collected from their discourse, that the speakers were persons of considerable consequence in the Sultan's court. Every one complained of the sovereign's severity, of his neglect of his nobles, of his exaltation of men of low birth to the first offices of the state, and particularly of the ill-treatment of his deserving son.

According to their account, this young Prince was compelled by his father's avarice and jealousy to submit to the most degrading humiliations, was restrained in all his pursuits and indulgences, and carefully debarred from all share of power and exertion of influence; and it seemed to be the universal opinion, that nothing could release him from this disgraceful captivity except the deposition of the man, who treated him so little like a father. Every one endeavoured to excuse his treason under colour of justice and the necessity of the case: and numerous arguments were advanced to prove, that the execution of their design would be one of the most noble actions ever accomplished; since, instead of the weak and bigotted Sultan, it would place a youthful, wise, and generous-minded Prince on the throne, whose brilliant talents and extraordinary virtues could not fail to produce the happiness of the whole kingdom, and to restore that vigour to its government, which had mouldered away under the erroneous ad-

ministration of the reigning monarch. Occasionally, the conference was interrupted by a soft complaining voice, which appeared rather to moderate than incite the resentment of the rest, till at length it even seemed to be changed into the tone of supplication; but its accents were so low, that it was impossible for Zeyn at such a distance to collect their import.

The conference was now at an end. The plan was finally arranged, and its execution confirmed by solemn oaths. The beams of the rising sun now glittered upon the ocean's bosom, and Zeyn heard the Confederates below as if preparing to depart. With caution he advanced his head beyond the precipice, and saw the Conspirators issue forth, and hasten to their horses, which Slaves held for them at some distance. He counted fourteen; they gave the spur to their coursers, and soon disappeared from his sight.

Zeyn now quitted his lurking-place, and soon discovered the entrance to the cave. He entered, and seating himself on a projec-

tion of the rock, remained for some time meditating on the important discovery, which he had just made. He had heard the Sultan described as a man, who distributed justice with the strictest impartiality; who was not known to be the slave of any particular weakness himself; and who never suffered crimes to pass unpunished, whether their perpetrator was a member of his Divan, or a driver of camels. Zeyn, therefore, thought it absolutely necessary, that this dangerous conspiracy should be revealed without delay: yet he could not think without repugnance on again interfering with the affairs of sovereigns. Besides, he was now nothing better than a poor fisherman, and how could he expect to gain an audience of the Sultan? The very request must needs excite suspicion; and if the slightest hint of his business once reached the conspirators, how easy would it be for such powerful persons to prevent his story from ever coming to the Sultan's knowledge, either by dis-

patching him privately, or burying him in some secret prison, till their plan should be effected?

Such were the reflections, whose thread was broken by a noise but too well known to him! It was the garment of his persecutor, which streamed in the wind with a rushing murmur. In the same instant the Spirit stood before him, and the sun, which pierced through a chasm of the rock, threw its beams upon that countenance, so cold, so serious, so awfully lovely. A groan of despair burst from the bosom of the wretched man, who felt, that he was again the persecuted Amorassan; and as he gazed in silence upon the dreaded vision, all his tranquillity, all his happiness, all his wishes, all his hopes, seemed at once to expire in his heart.

—"Amorassan," said the Spirit, "when last I parted from you, I thought, that we parted to meet no more: but the sea was not suffered to conceal you, and I am still your slave. Yet tremble not at my presence;

That last page, which I was not permitted to read in the Book of Destiny, and which contains the sum of your future fortunes, at this moment is unfolded; but your own heart must be your sole guide on this occasion, and I am not permitted to warn you or foretell the consequences of that act, which now agitates your uncertain thoughts. Happy is it for you, that I am *not* permitted!

"Look down, Amorassan! a seal-ring lies at your feet, and that seal-ring will confirm the truth of your discovery. Hereafter mankind shall vaunt the lucky accident, which drew it from its owner's finger: perhaps, you will even yourself believe it to have fallen by accident, for such is the name, which short-sighted mortals bestow on all occurrences, whose concealed principles are beyond their comprehension. Guard well that ring, and now act according to your free will, aided by no better counsellor than unbiassed human judgment. Fortune again proffers her sceptre to your hand; and it now depends upon himself alone to decide, whe-

ther Amorassan will resume all that he has lost, his wealth, his power, his greatness. Farewell!—Probably for ever! I came to you without joy, and I leave you without sorrow."—She said, and disappeared.

Amorassan carefully secured the ring within the folds of his girdle, drew his nets hastily, and regained the shore, while his mind was all confusion and alarm. Almost unconsciously he directed his steps towards the Sultan's residence; the market-place lay in his road, and while traversing it, he heard a herald proclaiming—"that the Prince had lost his seal-ring at the chace; and that whoever could find it, and restore it to its royal owner, should be rewarded with two hundred drachmas, and a robe of honour."—

The herald proceeded to describe the signet; Amorassan felt a cold shivering seize his limbs, when he recognized the ring, which at that moment was envelloped in his girdle. Before he was yet well recovered from the alarm of this discovery,

he was rouzed by a sudden tumult in the market-place, and on inquiring the cause, was informed, that the Sultan and his son were passing through it in their way to the principal mosque.

Thither also hastened Amorassan, eager to see the two illustrious persons, of whose destinies he was so unexpectedly become master. He forced his way through the crowd with an impetuosity, which bore down every obstacle, and soon found himself within the consecrated walls.

The Sultan was a man still in the prime of life, majestic in his deportment, but whose serious look was prevented from wearing any appearance of severity, by the benevolence of his expressive countenance. The Prince was at no great distance from his father; he was a lovely youth; yet the brilliance of his personal beauty was considerably obscured by a certain pensive gloom, for which Amorassan knew but too well how to account. His eyes were still fixed upon the Prince's face with in-

satiable curiosity, when he heard a voice from the pulpit pronounce aloud—"Ye true believers, know, that the Chief Iman has a dead person in his house, and is forbidden by the law from haranguing you this day. Let him therefore, who feels the inspiration of Allah, assume his place, and may the Prophet shed his spirit upon the speaker's lips!"—

Instantly a ray of light penetrated the mind of Amorassan. Eagerly he ascended the pulpit, and after a prayer for the preservation of the Sultan's life, he announced in a prophetic tone the existence of a most dangerous conspiracy, and called upon the people in energetic language to unite in defence of so excellent a sovereign. His discourse and manner excited universal astonishment. The people concluded, that the fisherman must needs be some unfortunate person, whom religious enthusiasm had deprived of his senses. But the wiser Sultan read in the orator's eyes, that his warnings were founded on more substantial

grounds, than he judged it prudent to explain to the multitude. Accordingly, the fisherman no sooner quitted the pulpit, than he was summoned to the palace by a royal command.

He lost no time in relating to the Sultan his adventure on the rock in all its circumstances. The monarch doubted the existence of so atrocious a plot, and warned his informer, not to trifle with him in a matter of such dangerous importance: yet even granting his story to be true, how could the culprits be recognized? The fisherman had not heard a single name; and he had listened at too great a distance to allow the possibility of his discovering them by the sound of their voices.

—"Mighty Lord!" said Amorassan, "thus much I know, that the fourteen conspirators are all members of the supreme Divan. Let a herald immediately call your whole council together, announcing that you require their assistance in consequence of the discovery of a most dangerous and

treasonable plot. My oration in the mosque must already have given them the alarm, and this further mention of a conspiracy will confirm the justice of their fears: on my life, the culprits will not dare to show themselves in your Divan."—

—"I like your counsel well," answered the Sultan; "and I like it the better, because by thus allowing them time to fly, I shall spare myself the necessity of shedding human blood; a necessity ever painful to my heart, however guilty be the sufferer. The Divan shall be summoned instantly."—

—"Yet one word!" observed Amorassan; "your enemies are equally the enemies of your son; perhaps are even more so. Then before your herald announces the certain existence of this plot, let your guards instantly hasten to the Prince's palace, and prevent all possibility of his falling into danger by escorting him to the Divan."—

—"So be it!" replied the Sultan.—The Divan was summoned, and thirteen of the

principal members of it failed to make their appearance. Messengers were dispatched a second time to require their presence; when it appeared, that some hours before, they had quitted the metropolis with every mark of terror and consternation.

On leaving the Divan, the Sultan's first care was to summon the fisherman to his presence.

—"Your veracity is confirmed," said the monarch; "yet my preservation is still incomplete. But thirteen of my nobles failed to appear in the Divan; and while the fourteenth (who perhaps is the most dangerous among them all) remains undiscovered, what perils have I not to expect from his secret machinations?"—

—"Sultan," replied Amorassan, "that fourteenth is well known to me; but till this moment I judged it unwise to discover that knowledge. Look on this well-known ring; it belongs to the chief of the conspiracy."—

—"All powerful Allah!" exclaimed the

Sultan, and the colour forsook his cheeks; "My son! My only son!"—

Amorassan.—It is but too true! I feel in my own heart, how deep is the wound, I have just inflicted upon thine.

The Sultan.—And why did you not reveal his guilt immediately?

Amorassan.—I feared, lest in the first movements of surprize and indignation, you should divulge his crimes to the Divan: terror would probably have forced from the Prince an avowal of his transgression; and while you punished his accomplices, with what show of justice could you have suffered the principal offender to escape with impunity? Either as a sovereign you must have resigned your sole offspring to the scaffold, or by pardoning him as a father, have shown your people a partial monarch in their ruler, and an unnatural son in his destined successor. I therefore put myself in your place; I felt for you, as a father should feel. It now rests with yourself to act towards the Prince as parent, or as

judge. His evil counsellors are removed; their places, filled by honest men of your own selection, will prevent the recurrence of this danger; your son is still respectable in the eyes of your court and of your people; you only are conscious of his offence, and (might I advise) he should remain for ever ignorant, that it is known even to *you!* Alas! how would he ever dare again to meet the eyes of the father, whom he had so much injured? How could he ever place confidence in that father's love, who had such good cause to despise and dread him?

The Sultan.—In this, as in all else, you have acted with true prudence! Yes! in the first moments of surprize, I should have sacrificed my son to my resentment, and the rest of my existence would have been one long agony of remorse! You have saved my life, but that is little; you have saved my son's, and that benefit is inestimable. And yet can it be possible? What? The son, whom I have ever loved so dear-

ly, can *he*..... what cause..... what motive.....

Amorassan.—Pardon me, while I explain even that. You have loved him as your son and as your heir; but your manner of loving him has been adopted according to your own affections and views, not according to his. You forgot, that he is young, and that youth is the season of the passions. You censured his failings with severity; perhaps with more, than you would have censured *any* failings except *his:* the trifling levities, natural to his age, were magnified into heinous offences by your over-eagerness to see your son a model of perfection: your anxiety to accustom him to œconomy, and to save your people from the extortions of a profuse and voluptuous sovereign, induced you to limit him even in his lawful and unavoidable expences, and it is easy for parsimony to degenerate into avarice. It was by placing these features of your character painted in exaggerated colours before your son's eyes,

that he was induced to favour this conspiracy. I speak not this at random: I repeat but the discoure of the conspirators themselves, while conversing with the Prince in the secret cavern. But though his reason was deluded, they could not corrupt his heart. I heard the mournful sound of his voice, which never rose above the accent of complaint; he spoke to soften, not to exasperate; Sultan, act by him with prudence, and I will stake my life, that your son's heart will still be yours.

The Sultan.—Your words have been like daggers; but I thank you for them, since I feel their truth. But you, whose eye can pierce so deeply, what is your name and your condition?

Amorassan.—I *am* a humble fisherman. What I *was*, ask not; I desire no other reward.

The Sultan.—Be it so! let us forget what you *were;* let us only speak of what you *shall* be. I need a man like you; my son (as you know but too well) needs such a

man still more than myself. Remain at my court; the place of Vizir, wealth, honour, and the fairest virgin of my Harem.....

Amorassan.—The daughter of my benefactor is already my betrothed; and the hut, which I inhabit, is much too small for the habitation of a virgin of your Harem. I am a fisherman now, I will remain so.

The Sultan.—Yet let me do something towards your comfort! The reward promised to the restorer of this ring, is at least your legal due.

Amorassan.—Then give it quickly and let me away! My bride must already be uneasy at my absence; and the hour draws near, when I am accustomed to bear my lame father to enjoy the evening-breeze.

The Sultan.—And should I need your counsels, (for where shall I obtain wiser?) will my friend refuse them? How shall I find you?

Amorassan.—My name is Zeyn; I dwell on the sea-shore with my adopted father, Alcouz, the palsied fisherman.

The Sultan.—Zeyn, from this moment *I* too am your father. And will then my son leave me without making *one* request?

Amorassan.—No, I will make one. Be gentle to the deluded youth, your son!

The Sultan.—Generous Zeyn! I swear it! On my death-bed only will I give him this ring, and tell him, how and where I found it! It shall be handed down in my family as an heir-loom, and every possessor of the throne shall bear it on his finger. But mark me, Zeyn; unrewarded you must not leave me, not for your own sake, but for mine. The city talks of nothing but your services; who will in future render me services, if *you* are seen to go without reward? The tale will spread from town to town, from village to village—"The poor fisherman saved the Sultan's life, and the avaricious Sultan suffered the fisherman to remain as poor as ever."—The love and respect of my subjects are my dearest treasures, and of these I must not suffer your disinterestedness to rob me. Accept

therefore enough to maintain your family in ease and comfort, and save me from the heavy charge of ingratitude.

Amorassan.—Your reasons are just, and I obey! I accept your proffered bounty; I thank you for your generosity to your son; I bathe with my tears the honoured hands, which hold so well the scales of justice; I bless you, and depart!"—

Amorassan hastened back to the hut, embraced Alcouz and his bride, and forgot, that he had ever been any other than Zeyn, the fisherman.

The next morning was to make Leilah his wife. Buried in tender melancholy, he stood alone at his chamber-window, when suddenly the form of the warning Spirit showed itself in the cold bright flood of moon-shine. Amorassan started.

—"We meet for the last time," said the Spirit; "your heart has decided your future fate; by the command of my omnipotent Master I now separate myself from you for ever, and return to the frozen ocean and

my native islands of chillness and gloom. Whether you have learned any thing during our intercourse, I neither know nor care. Truth was shown you; you could not support the sight, and sighed more anxiously for Illusion, than you had ever sighed for Truth. You have rejected the Sultan's favour; you have resolved to remain an unknown fisherman: perhaps you have judged wisely, perhaps not; I know not! but *this* at least I know; in order to make yourself what you are now, there was no need of calling me from the frozen ocean. With this truth I dissolve our union; farewell, and for ever."—

She placed her hand on his forehead: her touch congealed the blood in his veins; his heart seemed frozen, and he sank upon his couch insensible. And now stood before his mental eye in bright vision the assembly of illustrious Spirits, who inhabit the pavillion of Mount Caucasus. The superior Genius extended his wand, and Amorassan saw the glorious deeds of the

Sons of Virtue trace themselves on the airy walls in the brilliant colours of morning. At length his own praise-worthy deeds appeared upon the glowing pannels; but far out-shining all the rest, was the service, which he daily rendered to the poor old palsied fisherman.

—"Amorassan!" said the Genius Gela-Eddin, "your affections have revived those flowers of your life, which the breath of cold unfeeling Prudence had chilled and blighted. In fulfilling well the every-day duties of our station, not in its height or its extent, consists true greatness: in the rectitude of our intentions, not in the success of our actions, consists true merit. Let the heart prompt his measures, let the understanding advise the means, let Benevolence and Reason unite in forming his plans, and then may the mortal walk forward in his appointed course with firm and fearless footsteps. Beyond this, all is Destiny's!"—

Amorassan awoke; the roseate vapours

of the vision still seemed to glow upon his countenance; the voice of the Genius still sounded in his ears, and the pulses of his heart faithfully echoed back every tone of that celestial harmony.

THE CALIPH.

As many visions as you please, Ben Hafi, but no more freezing Spirits! However, Amorassan has parted with his persecutor for ever; and since he would now no longer bring such a disagreeable companion along with him, I am truly sorry, that his dislike to Sultans will prevent his accepting an invitation to Bagdad. I should have been heartily glad to see him; but it seems, he is determined to do nothing for the remainder of his life but catch fish, and keep clear of courts and princes; and truly I cannot but acknowledge that he is very much in the right.

CHAP. XV.

—"Witness Heaven,
What love sincere and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceived."—

MILTON.

BEN HAFI.

IT is true, most mighty Lord, that Amorassan wished in future to avoid princes; but it was his destiny to find their affairs continually intermingled with his own. Scarcely had three months elapsed since his marriage, when one night a knocking was heard at the door of his new dwelling; it was a modest but convenient house, which the Sultan in gratitude had caused

to be erected on the very spot, to which Amorassan had been accustomed to bear the lame Alcouz every evening.

Leilah hastened to open the door. A youth in mean apparel, but whose pale countenance immediately interested her in his favour, complained of weariness and hunger, and requested hospitality for a single night. It was granted readily; but the next morning the stranger was too ill to proceed on his journey. He remained in the cottage, and for many weeks received from Amorassan and his wife the attentions due to a brother. Their care at length conquered the obstinacy of his complaint, and the stranger declared himself indebted to them alone under heaven for health and life.

During his convalescence, a friendship of the closest nature was formed between the stranger and his host. Amorassan at length carried his confidence so far, as to reveal to him even the most secret transactions of

his life; and the stranger repaid confidence with confidence.

—"Your story," said he, "in many respects is not unlike my own. I too was born to prosperity and splendour; my eyes first unclosed themselves in a palace, and my father was one of those ill-fated mortals, to whom the painful task is allotted of governing their fellow-creatures.

"I had an elder brother; never did Nature form a mortal of milder materials, or one who possest a more pure or more generous heart: and this brother loved *me*, as never brother loved a brother before; and *I* loved this brother, as never man before was loved by man.

"Our father was a wise and deep-thinking sovereign: he had witnessed our childish affection with satisfaction; but now that the years of manhood were approaching, he apprehended, lest the younger son should be tempted by this apparent equality to forget his duty to his future master, and began to consider so intimate

a connection as highly dangerous to my brother and the state."—

THE CALIPH.

Ben Hafi!—Surely, it is not possible.... but proceed! Quick, quick, Ben Hafi!

BEN HAFI.

—"One day, our father sent for us into his closet, read us a severe lecture upon the different duties of our stations, and commanded me in future never more to address or approach my future master with that unseemly familiarity, to which I had hitherto been accustomed. He left us—we remained for some minutes silent and bewildered; at length I raised my eyes to my brother's, and I saw, that they were filled with tears."—

(And at this moment tears gushed from the eyes of the Caliph. Ben Hafi appeared not to remark his emotion, and continued.)

"I threw myself on his bosom, and exclaimed—'Be my master; my strict, my

revered, my dreaded master; a master as strict and dreaded, as our father appears to *us*. But yet love me still in your heart, my brother; I only ask to be still loved in the secrecy of your heart!"—

—"You are my brother," he replied, while he prest me to his bosom; "how then can I ever be your master? We are brethren now; and how can we ever be aught else?"—

—"The next morning he entered my chamber with the first beams of light. He took my arm, rubbed upon my wrist a little ointment, and then stamped it with a signet, on which his name was engraved. Such was the virtue of that particular ointment, that the characters from that moment were impossible to be effaced. He then obliged me to stamp my name upon *his* wrist in a similar manner.

—"And now," said he "if ever the slightest suspicion should arise between us, if ever the most trifling movement of displeasure shall evince itself in my conduct

towards you, come to me without fear, and show me this mark. I shall remember the occasion, on which it was engraved; I shall banish all distrust and displeasure from my bosom; and be the cause of our disunion slight, or important, I swear by Allah! that I will instantly forget it, and remember nothing, except that you are my brother and my friend."—

"Shortly after this we were separated, and our education was conducted on different plans. My brother's instructors were quite of another species from mine, and their lessons were solely calculated to form the *sovereign:* what regarded the *man* was (they thought) no business of theirs; or if it formed any part of their instructions, it was only to impress upon their pupil's mind their great leading maxim, that the feelings of the second ought always to be subordinate to the rights and duties of the first.

"My father died; my brother ascended the throne; and now.....!

"No; I do not censure my deluded, my misguided brother; but I censure myself, that when I possest in letters of my enemies the certain vindication of my affection and fidelity, I suffered the feelings of indignant pride and wounded friendship to make me disdain all explanation. These tears do not flow because I now wander through the world a houseless beggar, but because my absence has left him alone and defenceless in the power of his seducers. Why did I not appeal to his fraternal friendship? Why did I not trust to his generous heart? Even had he still believed me to be a traitor, even had he punished my supposed crime with death, the attempt at vindication would but have cost me my life; but silence and suspicious flight must surely have cost my brother his innocence. Believing me to be false, he will believe no one to be faithful; believing my virtue to have been a mask, he will believe others to be equally dissemblers. I left him surrounded by men but too well disposed to take advantage of

his generous yeilding nature, and mould it to their own ambitious and interested views. His power will be abused; his people will be miserable; and he will himself be wretched on his golden throne, for I know that, deprived of me, his heart never can be happy."—

At this moment the deaf Megnoun started from the ground, and exclaimed with strong emotion—"Ben Hafi, you surely speak of the good Prince Abdallah: nothing else could affect my Lord so strongly!"—

—"Yes! oh! yes!" the Caliph pronounced with difficulty; "the poor forlorn stranger..... was Abdallah! was my brother!"—

He reclined his head upon the shoulder of Megnoun, and sobbed aloud.

—"Amurath!" said, after a few moments, a gentle voice, whose well-known melody pierced to the Caliph's very heart. He uttered a cry of astonishment; he started from the sopha, and unclosed his arms. Ben Hafi had thrown off his upper garment;

the grey beard and wrinkles had disappeared, and the roses of youth glowed upon his smiling cheeks. He now wore the same dress, in which the Caliph had seen his brother on the night previous to his flight from Bagdad, and he pointed to certain characters imprest upon the naked wrist of his right hand.

—"Abdallah!" cried the Caliph, and threw himself upon his bosom; "my friend, my brother! I have thee again then, my Happiness! my Strength! my Reason! my Virtue!—Ah! Abdallah! canst thou forgive me?"—

—"Say rather," replied the Prince, "canst thou forgive me for having rejected all explanation? I ought to have insisted upon admission to your presence; I ought to have shown you this well-known mark, these characters imprest by the hand of fraternal friendship....."

—"No, no, my brother!" interrupted the Caliph, while he kissed the mark on his brother's wrist, and bathed it with repent-

ant tears; "you did wisely and well to avoid me. Had you at that time ventured into my presence.... I was so blinded.... so deluded.... but I have since discovered the treachery, though not its authors."—

—"Their names are well known to *me*," replied Abdallah; "Muzaffer will see, that their guilt is placed beyond the power of doubting by this letter."—

As he said this, he presented a paper to the thunder-struck Vizir. He read but a few lines, then fell at the Prince's feet, and murmured—"Be merciful."—The Caliph's eyes flamed with indignant vengeance; but Abdallah became a suppliant for his vanquished enemy. Muzaffer was allowed to preserve his life, and a moderate proportion of his treasures, but was ordered to quit the Caliph's dominions within eight and forty hours on pain of death. And now Amurath turned again to his brother with tender reproaches for having kept him so long in ignorance of his being so near him.

—"Report," said Abdallah, "represent-

ed you to me in such odious colours, and the miseries, which I witnessed while travelling through your dominions, confirmed so strongly the belief of your altered disposition, that I thought it imprudent to present myself before you without having ascertained your real character. But I was soon convinced, that the Vizir, not the Caliph, was the tyrant, under whose oppression Arabia groaned, and that my brother was as a man the same benevolent generous being, whom as a boy I had loved so dearly."—

—"But your voice.... so soft.... so touching.... how could I have ever mistaken its sweet harmonious accents?"—

—"You were misled by a thin plate of silver placed upon my tongue, and which altered its tone completely."—

—"And your friend Amorassan? Alas! I fear, that he was a deception too! But one thing, Abdallah, I cannot consent to believe ideal! Oh! still preserve in my mind the belief, that there really exists that bright

pavillion; and let me die in the happy persuasion, that hand in hand we shall one day be received there. Then brother, then shall we take our places among the Spirits and the Genii! and *you* shall sit by my side; and my poor deaf Megnoun shall sit at my feet; and Allah shall send down a friendly gracious look, as a benediction on his children."—

PEACE BE WITH YOU, AND WITH ME!

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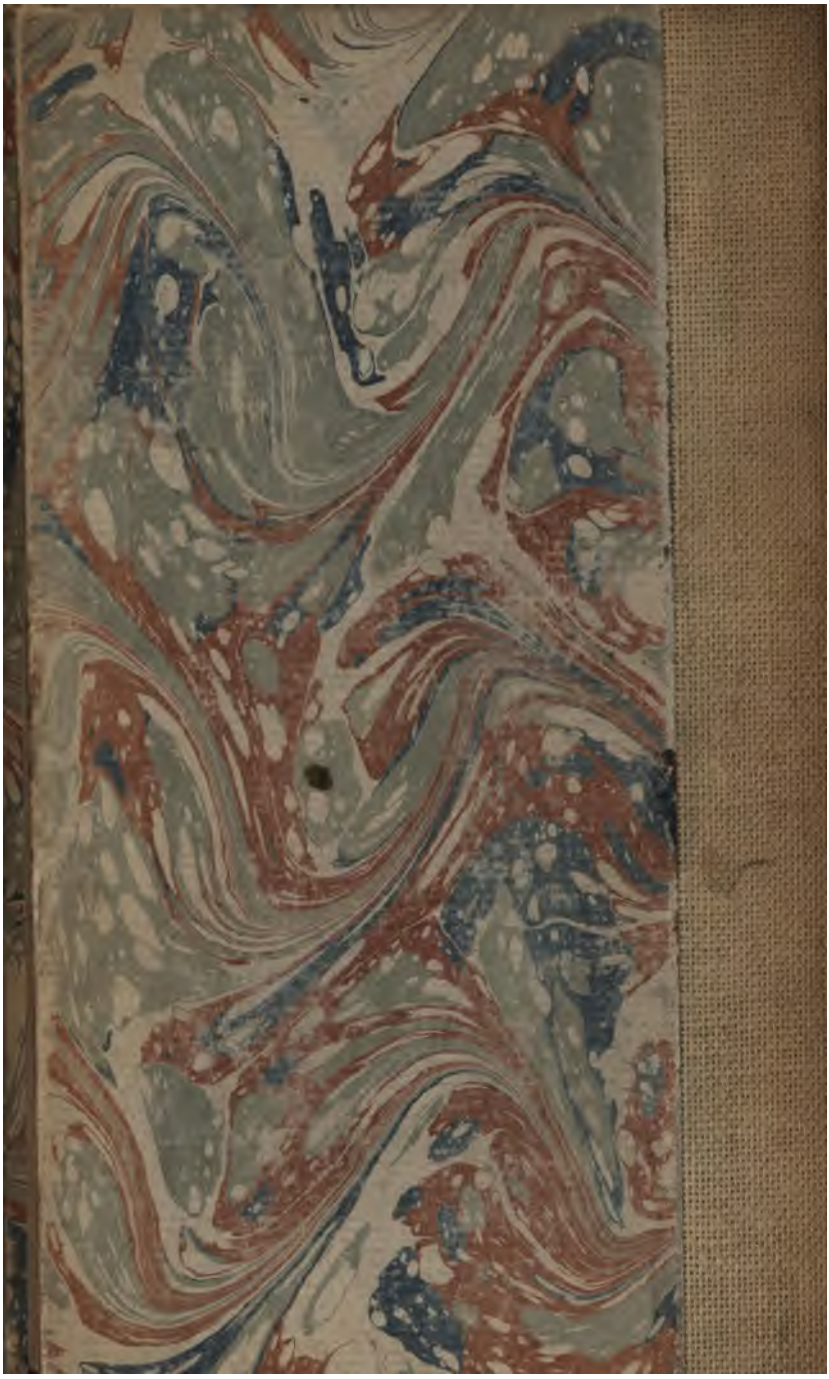
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